the indian
MUSLIM

A Documentary Record Of Muslim Struggle For Independence.

1900 _ 1947

7 Volumes

THE INDIAN MUSLIMS

A DOCUMENTARY RECORD

PROF. SHAN MUHAMMAD

Islamic Book Centre

H. O. 25, B, Masson Road
P.O. Box, 1625

Sales. 26, Paisa Akhbar.
Anarkali,

LAHORE

ALLIED BOOKS

★ The Aligarh Movement
(1864—1898)
3 VOLS.

★ Successors of
SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

★ UN-PUBLISHED LETTERS
OF ALI BROTHERS

THE INDIAN MUSLIMS

A Documentary Record of Muslim Struggle for Independence

(1900—1947)

VOLUME I

FOUNDING OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

PREFACE

The break-up of British India into two sovereign states of India and Pakistan in 1947 has engaged the attention of scholars with the object of studying the causes that led to such a geo-political change in the sub-continent. While a number of works have been published relating to the national movement, the study of Muslim problems, their attitude towards Indian politics, the extent of their participation in it, their misunderstandings and disappointments, leading to the partition of India, still need to be studied objectively and in their entirety. There is a great dearth of material dealing with Muslims, and no effort has been made to bring to light documents which may serve as a source material for scholars working on political trends in the crucial period of Indian history prior to partition. The present collection of documents is designed to illustrate the course of Muslim politics in India from 1900 to 1947, a period which has witnessed the growth, development and maturity of Muslim political consciousness in India. Documents on Muslim political history from 1864 to 1898 have already been published as *The Aligarh Movement : Basic Documents.* This work is an extension of the same project.

The nature of work needs an interpretation of the word 'Document' in relation to politics. Technically speaking, almost every written work of an original character is a document, such as letters, editorials, press comments, memoirs, speeches, official and semi-official reports, memorials, constitutional schemes, proceedings of the Foreign and Home departments of Government and all those papers which go to illustrate the political history of a country or community. In the selection of these documents I have kept in view their rarity as well as their importance, and the future results which are likely to follow from their study. These documents have been chronologically arranged, making it easier for scholars to co-relate them with other contemporary socio-political movements.

The sources used in this collection include the micro-films containing correspondence between the Viceroys and Secretaries of State for India, and other responsible British officials, highlighting Muslim thinking and its repercussion on general Indian politics. It is quite obvious that no one can reproduce the full text of letters or other documents of the period under study which run into thousands of pages. While taking extracts from the micro-films I have taken care to ensure that they are of relative importance to Muslims in the context of Indian politics. This does not, however, mean that there are no full texts in this compilation. There are hundreds of them depending on their utility and relevance.

I have collected documents from most contemporary sources available

in India, Newspapers of the first quarter of the current century are not easily accessible for consultation as they have become very old and worn out. Nevertheless they have been micro-filmed and reproduced here. I think my collection of newspaper comments, editorials, and articles will supply precious material to scholars and it is here that the merit of this work lies. Some of the newspapers consulted are : the *Mussalman*, the *Tribune*, the *Pioneer*, the *Bengalee*, the *Englishman*, the *Independent*, the *Muslim Outlook*, the *Comrade*, the *Times*, the *Bombay Chronicle*, the *Dawn* and the *Hindustan Times.* Besides, the proceedings of the Home Department, Government of India, found in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, have also been utilised. Among the important journals, I have consulted the *Asiatic Review*, the *Modern Review*, the *Indian Review*, the *Journal of Moslem Institute Calcutta*, the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, the *Nineteenth Century and After*, the *Indian Quarterly Register*, the *Indian Annual Register*, *India* and a few others. Extracts from the micro-films of *Hamilton-Curzon Papers*, *Minto-Morley Papers*, *Hardinge Papers*, *Montague-Chelmsford Papers*, *All-India Congress Committee Papers*, have also been taken for the benefit of those who do not have access to them as they are to be found in the far flung areas of India or lie buried deep in dusty archives. I have culled valuable information from these sources and placed them at the disposal and within easy reach of scholars working in this field. These documents are being published in several volumes, with sections therein corresponding to the periods to which they relate.

Every document has been collated with the source indicated towards the end of each script. They are reproduced as they were and no effort has been made to standardize spellings or punctuations or even correct obvious mistakes in order to maintain their original form. In the realm of research no work can claim to be the last word on the subject with which it deals. Still I can make the modest claim that for a long time to come the present study will greatly benefit future generations of scholars, both Indian and foreign. It will also serve to clear many doubts which are nourished due to certain faulty assumptions or deep-seated prejudices. Many cobwebs of contemporary history would thus be removed, and developments studied in their proper perspective. I must express my tremendous sense of obligation to Professor A. B. Lal, Professor A. D. Pant (Allahabad University), Professor S. A. H. Haqqi, Professor K. A. Nizami and Professor Syed Nasir Ali (Aligarh Muslim University) who inducted me into this study and guided me in sifting the material for these volumes.

Dept. of Political Science
Aligarh Muslim University
ALIGARH.

SHAN MUHAMMAD

INTRODUCTION

The revolt of 1857 settled, once for all, the invincibility of the British rule in India and reduced the Indian resistance to shambles. The post-Mutiny era was irksome for the Indians in general but was ruinous for the Muslims in particular. The latter were suspected of conspiring against the new government to regain their lost empire. The British, therefore, followed a vindictive policy. The Muslims were reduced to penury and all the avenues of services and pecuniary profits were closed upon them. The Muslims also did not co-operate with them and a feeling of deep-seated hostility and mutual suspicion continued to dominate both the rulers and the ruled. It was under these circumstances that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan appeared on the scene as a saviour of the Muslim community. He realised the gravity of the situation and endeavoured to bridge the gulf that existed between the two. This was a gigantic task and could not be achieved easily.

After 1857 Sir Syed had to face a two-fold challenge. One from his own community who was unwilling to co-operate with the British because they were considered mainly responsible for their loss of political power. They detested English education and refused to co-operate with the British in the consolidation of their power in the east. The second challenge was from the British who were determined to do away with all the vestiges of Muslim predominance in India culturally as well as politically. Thus Sir Syed had a herculian task before him. While telling the British to be non-vindictive toward Muslims, he also appealed to the latter to adopt western education and shed away their prejudices against the rulers. Through the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* and a number of books and pamphlets Syed propagated his ideas and started in the seventies the Aligarh Movement to establish an educational institution meant primarily for the education of Muslims. The Mahommedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, was the outcome of this modest effort which in course of time developed into the Aligarh Muslim University. Throughout his long career, Sir Syed firmly held that no government could be better for India in the prevalent circumstances than that of the British and if India was to make any progress it could only do so under the aegis of the British.

From 1857 till his death, he devoted himself to bring about a political understanding between the English rulers and Muslims of India. In this way he tried to bring about the regeneration of the latter. Through the alumini of the M. A. O. College Sir Syed impressed upon them to be loyal to the British since they had to be the elite of the Muslim intelligentsia and be the leaders of their community which position they could not hold unless they gained the favour of the rulers. True to the spirit the Aligarh College never witnessed any anti-British movement during the life-time of its founder. In the interest of Muslim education, Sir Syed avoided

politics, opposed the Indian National Congress founded in 1885 and exhorted the Muslims that their salvation lay solely in education. Till 1857, Muslims had no politics in the technical sense of the word, and if they had it was purely local. It was after the Mutiny that an all-India movement began to take root with Sir Syed who explored best avenues for the educational development among the Muslims. Sir Syed talked less of politics and more of education as he was convinced that politics would be an inevitable result of higher education. This is proved by the fact that just after his death towards the turn of century, Muslims taught at Aligarh started thinking in terms of politics and asked their co-religionists to ponder over the question of establishing a Muslim Press in English to acquaint the government of their legitimate grievances. The *Mahommedan Observer* (18 October 1894) warned the Mussulmans that 'inaction thereof would end disastrously in political degeneration and ruin of the Mahommedans of India.' Such ideas developed among the Muslims at a fast pace.

At this stage of Muslim political consciousness the Ganapati festival in the south and the Urdu-Hindi controversy in the northern India engaged the attention of Muslims. The Ganapati festival was started at the instance of Bal Gangadhar Tilak round about 1893 after the Hindu-Muslim riots in Bombay. Tilak remembered the attitude of police during the Muslim-Parsee riots a few years back and he also knew what reply was given to the terror-striken Parsee deputation which waited on the Governor of Bombay, Sir Philips Wodehouse who told them : 'You Parsees ought to learn the lesson of defending yourselves and not depending wholly on government.' The Police Commissioner, Frank Souter, went still further and said, 'Damn you Parsis, you have provoked the row. I would like to see all Parsis killed. I will remove the police force and will not help you.' The Bombay riots left poignant memories and forced Tilak to find out a means of saving Hindus from Muslim onslaught. To Tilak, Hindus, in spite of their majority, suffered because they lacked courage and confidence. He was not hostile to the Muslims but was opposed to the British who instigated them. It is evident from a letter of Lord Harris, Governor of Bombay, who wrote to one of his friends (15 August 1893), 'The Muslims have assumed a boorish and arrogant attitude which is the result of the encouragement they receive from the Government.' This compelled Tilak to organise Hindus under the canopy of the Ganapati celebrations. Not only did he want to unite the Hindus under the special patronage of the most popular diety in India, he also wanted to stir up the masses against the British through this weapon. In the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* one would find scores of articles steeped in nationalism, rousing the people to oust their foreign masters.

As Ganapati festival was not deemed sufficient, Tilak founded another festival and that related to Shivaji to create self-confidence among the Hindus. Shivaji was a great hero of Maratha history whose tomb had fallen into decay. Tilak founded a committee and subscribed money to repair the tomb, appealing the people to contribute even the last pie for its reconstruction. By 1896 the Shivaji movement had made a remarkable success and Tilak organised a public festival in commemoration of the birth anniversary of Shivaji. The movement

was further strengthened by high-lighting the Shivaji Afzal Khan controversy. With the passage of time the two movements which had their beginning in the south had a positive response in the north as well. These religio-political movements served to consolidate the Hindus on the one hand and create suspicion in the minds of Muslims on the other. Just at the same time a parallel movement to oust Urdu was also gaining ground in the north. The extremist Hindus had started their anti-Urdu campaign towards the closing years of the nineteenth century. In the British, however, they found their most faithful ally to regain their linguistic supremacy. It is obvious that language has always been a great force in strengthening the community's social, cultural and political life. With the advent of the Muslim rule in India, Persian came to dominate the entire administrative and social life of the Muslims. Towards the last days of the Muslim rule, Urdu had cropped up as a new *lingua franca* in India. Under the Mughals the Hindu nobility also spoke Persian as it was not only the court language but also the spoken language of the elite. When Urdu replaced Persian they adopted it as their language. But hostility against the Persian script seemed to be present throughout and when the Mughal power disappeared the Hindus agitated to replace Hindi in the Deva Nagri script in place of Persian and Urdu.

The Allahabad Institute was in the forefront of Persian-Nagri script controversy. In one of its meetings on 27 September 1868, Babu Beni Madhuk Bhattacharjee claimed that among all the languages current in India, Hindi occupied the pride of place, being spoken and written by about a hundred million people scattered all over an area of about thousand miles in length and breadth. Almost all the speakers said that they hailed with unmixed satisfaction the proposal for substituting the Deva Nagri script for Persian character. But there were some Hindus also who wanted Urdu in the Persian script to be continued as an official language. Pandit Shambo Nath, Secretary, Literary Society, Fatehpur, was one of those who favoured the continuation of Persian script. But such section had a meagre following and as the years rolled by the protagonists of Hindi script strengthened their hold on the government. A Nagri Pracharini Sabha was founded in 1893 and Raja Sheoraj Singh of Kashipur declared that he was decidedly in favour of the substitution of Nagri character. He contended that Hindus had as much right for the introduction and recognition of Hindi as the Muslims had for the continuation of Urdu. The incessant propaganda of the protagonists of Hindi created doubts among the Muslims who suspected that there was a conspiracy in it. It became a communal issue and later on developed into a political problem.

During the life-time of Sir Syed the controversy had already started but the powerful personality of the great leader foiled all the plans of the pro-Hindi agitators. Sir Syed passed away in 1898 and Hindus again started a vigorous campaign in support of Hindi. In the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Anthony MacDonnell, of the United Provinces they found their greatest sympathiser and persuaded him to recognise Hindi as official language. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who succeeded Sir Syed in 1898 as a leader of the Muslim

community, opposed the anti-Urdu movement. An Urdu Defence Association was formed with Mohsin-ul-Mulk as its head. The agitational mood of the Muslim community annoyed the Lieutenant Governor who asked the Nawab to choose between the Secretaryship of the Aligarh College and the Urdu Defence Association. Mohsin-ul-Mulk did not like the official intervention but withdrew from the association in the interest of the College. But it was taken by the Muslims as a direct encroachment on the right of the whole community. The stage had come when silence was no longer considered as a sign of virtue and the Mahommedan Political Association that had grown up as a result of Hindi-Urdu controversy was further activised. Thus Muslim loyalty after a lapse of about thirty years was again on the cross-roads.

Muslim agitation was taken up by the British as a challenge to an imperialist regime. Anglo-Indian papers started uttering caution to government about the changed Muslim attitude towards the government and politics. Alfred Nundy, an Anglo-Indian journalist, went to the extent of telling the officials that the Muslims had changed their course and were joining the Indian National Congress. Such accusations were not conducive to the interest of the Muslims. Therefore Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Imad-ul-Mulk denied the charges and made it clear that the intentions of the Muslim community in forming the Urdu Defence Association were being misrepresented. They said that even Sir Syed himself was not immune to these attacks. Mohsin-ul-Mulk continued to stick to the view that the attitude of the Muslims towards the Congress had not changed and that these two issues should not be mixed up. He still considered that the policy of the Congress was injurious for the Muslim community. He insisted that western education was of paramount importance for the Muslims and that they should abstain from adopting an agitational approach which was the primary aim of the Indian National Congress. The displeasure of the Muslims over the Urdu-Hindi issue was a separate matter and should not be confused with their political leanings.

Supporting Mohsin-ul-Mulk and refuting the charges of Nundy, Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk, in a letter to the *Pioneer*, said that the Mussulmans had kept themselves aloof from the Congress from the very outset and were averse to joining the Congress in spite of the language controversy. He clarified his position in these words : 'We have therefore made it our business to teach our political creed at Aligarh so that the rising generation should grow up in its doctrines which we deem to be sounder and much more patriotic than the doctrines taught by the Congress.'

Alfred Nundy in his counter allegation refuted the assertion of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk and asked them to specifically reply the following questions : (*a*) Considering that it was an article of faith with the late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan that the Muslims would never participate in any political agitation, and it was said with much warmth that the policy initiated by him was still religiously followed, how could the Urdu-Nagri demonstrations in different parts of the N. W. Provinces be justified ? (*b*) If these were not political meetings, having for their object the redress of an

alleged grievance, what other name had been given for them ? (*c*) What did Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk mean in his address at Rampur when he said—'I quite admit that in these modern days of enlightenment the people are entitled to criticise the acts of, and have some voice in, the management of their offices ?' Was not this a departure from the policy of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan ? (*d*) Did not Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk in his address delivered on 22 August 1900 at Lucknow deal with the advantages to be derived by a better understanding between the Hindus and Muslims ? He also questioned the statement made by Nawab Mehdi Hasan Fateh Nawaz Jung, a renowned Barrister of Lucknow suggesting that the Mussulmans should join the Congress.

Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk further clarified the Muslim view-point and in a lecture to the students of the Mahommedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, he said : 'I hope you will never be enticed by the siren voice of any agitation, European or Native, and join the movement under the delusion that you will thereby become a member of Her Majesty's opposition.' Nawab Mehdi Fateh Nawaz Jung whose name was also referred to by Nundy in his statement also clarified the position. He said that he still believed that India was prospering under British rule and it was unwise to create unnecessary difficulties in the way of the Government by stirring popular agitation. But to the editor of the *Pioneer* he very frankly wrote, 'No community can prosper if it sits with folded hands trusting to Government to satisfy its needs, but ready to reproach it for not having learnt by inspiration what was likely to promote its welfare. Having regard to these principles which I take as my guide there was nothing inconsistent in my inviting the leaders of the Congress for whom everyone of us has the greatest possible respect to a banquet... nor was there anything inconsistent in my taking part in the Urdu defence agitation. It was to propagate the above principle that in a speech delivered on an occasion when Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was present and when he advocated the sinking of minor differences between Hindus and Muslims and their meeting to promote their common welfare, that I declared that the time had arrived when the members of my community must throw off their lethargy and let the Government, in a calm, loyal and dispassionate manner, know their wants and grievances, and even take into their consideration whether it was not possible to arrive at an understanding with the members of other communities so far as joint action in political matter was concerned.'

The Hindi-Urdu controversy and the recognition of the Nagri script in the courts of the United Provinces by Sir Anthony MacDonnell shocked the Muslims and their sentiments had been hurt. No one can deny that in the period under discussion the vernacular newspapers published in the Punjab, North-Western Provinces of Agra and Oudh, some 80 per cent were published in Urdu with a proportionately large number of Hindu readers; while there was not a single Hindi newspaper with even a thousand subscribers. Thus none could deny the popularity of the Urdu language and therefore the circular of the Governor of U.P. referred to above was considered by the Muslims as a positive step against their interests. An anti-British feeling among the Muslim masses, who now realised their mistake in following an

isolationist policy, intensified. Muslims drifted from passive loyalism to active politics. That the Muslims were gradually going to the other camp, there was no doubt about it. Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung, the undaunted champion of Muslims, entertained the leaders of the Congress to a banquet in Lucknow when its sitting was held there and some months later in a public speech advised the Muslims to make common cause with the Hindus, and to devise some compromise by which they could enter into the fold of the Indian National Congress. Later, he was questioned by Mohsin-ul-Mulk to explain these damaging statements and to reply as to what ought to be the attitude of the Muslims as regards public questions. Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung emphatically replied that a community must either take to free and open agitation in public, or would have to fall back on secret agitation which he deprecated as not only injurious to itself but harmful for the government. For his this attitude he was criticised by Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk who called his ideas 'illogical' and in a letter to the editor of the *Pioneer* he dubbed the Congress leaders as traitors and rebels and deserving to be hanged. But to Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung it was not a sincere expression and was only a specimen of flattery and servility resorted to by a certain section to please the government, a performance which he characterised as lowering the character of the Muslims in public estimation.

Regarding the statement made by Nundy that he, in a public speech in Lucknow, had declared that the Mussulmans should join the Congress, the Nawab replied that he still stood by his words and was prepared to justify his statement. He invited the leaders of the Congress to a banquet only when he felt that their speeches in favour of reforms had become moderate and since political agitation had become a necessity for the Mussulmans, he felt that the Muslims should also consider if their policy of isolation from the Congress was justified.

In a detailed letter to the editor of the *Pioneer*, Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung explained further his stand and said, 'I hold that a public discussion of grievances, carried out in a temperate and constitutional manner, is a necessity forced upon us, if we are desirous of preserving ourselves as a nation and not becoming 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'. And if a public agitation for the preservation of our rights has been forced upon us, I take it that the time has arrived when the thoughtful and educated members of our community must take into serious consideration whether they gain anything by living in alienation from the other communities who are making rapid strides....' Quoting Shams-ul-Ulema Syed Ali Bilgrami (brother of Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk) who a few weeks ago declared that he deprecated strongly the idea of complete isolation from the Hindu brothers in movements involving national progress, he said, 'similarly, I, as one interested in the welfare of my community, threw out a hint in the speech... whether the time had arrived to consider how far it was possible to arrange a compromise with the leaders of the National Congress so that it may be practical for the Mahommedans to take part in it and I am prepared to stand by my declaration.... Whatever they may do in the future, it would be unsafe to predict

but this much I will admit that the policy of isolation, hitherto adopted, is gradually losing its advocates, and a change of some kind seems both imminent and desirable.'

The above views of Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung, Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk and Shams-ul-Ulema Syed Ali Bilgrami go to prove that there was division among the educated Muslims as to what should be their future policy with regard to political questions.

Mohsin-ul-Mulk was very clear in his political ideas. He believed that 'for the Hindus and Mahommedans to prosper without union is impossible, and God willing a time will come when each of the two communities setting aside their partial differences will work towards the improvement of their country's State.' This shows that he felt that the policy of isolation from the Hindus would no longer be followed. Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung, as quoted previously, also felt the same when he spoke to the Muslim intelligentia in Lucknow meeting that there was a growing desire on the part of the Muslims to participate in political agitations, and that the time was coming when they would come into the fold of the Congress and that the policy of isolation hitherto adopted was losing its advocates and a change was desirable, pointed to the same direction, *i.e.*, a departure from Sir Syed's policy. Thus, Alfred Nundy's assessment on Muslim politics from loyalism to anti-Britishness was not sweeping.

Later on the same year a deputation of the Muslims of the Mahommedan Anglo-Oriental College waited on Sir Anthony MacDonnell to express their loyalty but the Lieutenant-Governor did not appear to have any sympathy with them and replied that the Government had many things to do and many claimants to think of. 'God helps those', he said, 'who help themselves, and your interests are best promoted by self-reliance and by equipping yourself with the arms which modern education supplies. Do not let yourselves be diverted from this latter object by the bugbearers of religious heterodoxy, or try the appeals of Nadvats to antique formulas. National regeneration is not worked out in that way, and the battle of modern life must be fought with modern weapon....' Though Mohsin-ul-Mulk had withdrawn from the Urdu Defence Association and confined himself to the Secretaryship of the College for the betterment of the Muslim community yet Sir Anthony MacDonnell was still displeased and he even asked Mohsin-ul-Mulk to drop the title in the official correspondence conferred on him by His Exalted Highness, the Nizam and recognised by the Government of India. This attitude of the officials was not liked by the Muslims who considered it an insult for the whole of the Muslim community.

II

By the year 1900 it was accepted by all among the Muslims that the formation of some sort of political organisation was essential for safeguarding Muslim interests. Different educated Muslim circles had different views about the formation of a political association. Mian (later Sir) Muhammad Shafi's

letter to the *Observer* (Lahore) suggested the formation of an All-India Muslim League while Viqar-ul-Mulk asserted the revival of the Anglo-Mahommedan Oriental Defence Association of Upper India. Theodore Morison who succeeded Beck at Aligarh, doubted the success of such an organisation because of the lack of finance and education among the Muslims. 'A Mahommedan Political Association', he wrote, 'is a high-sounding name, but unless it has ably edited newspapers, appearing regularly by capable and energetic men to organise and go about the country lecturing and addressing meetings, it will be still-born like the Urdu Defence Association which did nothing.' He opposed the idea of a Political Association and believed that it would prove injurious instead of beneficial, predicting that a political movement upon the lines of the National Congress would probably lead to a severe scrutiny of Muslim claims because political participation in India amounted to opposition of the government which would certainly alienate them from the sympathy of a great many officials who had been sympathetic to them after the assurances given by Sir Syed about the fidelity of the Muslims. 'I am sure', he warned them, 'they would forfeit it if they (Muslims) embarked upon a campaign of villifying the Government and all its works which is the realist means of vamping life into a political movement in India.'

What should, then, the Muslims do ? Should they drop the idea of a political organisation or form a new one. They were in a dilemma. In an article entitled— 'What Action Should The Mahommedans Take to Defend Their Rights', Morison advised them to form a council of men who were honestly interested in public questions and let them meet frequently. The proposed council would lead Muslim opinion and direct their action in political affairs. He was of the view that the Muslim members of the said council would be certain to become members of the Viceroy's Council and they would be frequently consulted on public questions. Concluding his article he said : 'The rapid spread of wealth and education among the Mussulmans would be a political fact of much greater importance than the assignment to them of votes in the elections to Councils or Municipalities. If the Mussulmans were again to become what they once were, the most wealthy and educated community in India, they would acquire a predominence of political power under the present or any other constitution. Speaking purely of politics and leaving aside all higher consideration, the creation of a Mahommedan University would give the Mahommedans more political power than any political privileges they can possibly acquire in the next 15 or 20 years, and since they have embarked upon the strenous undertaking, I trust they will not abandon the pursuit of the substance to chase the shadow.' Thus Morison while disfavouring the idea of forming a political association wanted to divert their attention to the creation of a Muslim University, a means to give them political predominance in times to come.

A true imperialist as Morison was, he felt that any political movement among the Muslim community would create obstacles and weaken the British hold on India. Most of the Muslims including Mohsin-ul-Mulk also felt the same. But a certain section among the Muslims was not willing to go with

either Morison or Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

A state of uncertainty prevailed among the Muslims. To settle the future course of action, a meeting was convened at Lucknow on 21-22 October 1901, with Hon'ble Sharfuddin, barrister of Patna, and Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, Chairman of the first and second sessions of the Conference respectively. The Conference came to the following conclusions after having passed the resolutions :

(1) That the Muslims of India should form an organisation with a view to secure united action in social and political affairs.

(2) That the welfare of the Mussulman community depended on the stability and permanence of British rule in India, to which they would present their demands most respectfully and an endeavour should be made that the real intentions and policy of the Government be not misunderstood.

(3) That the Mussulmans should avoid a hostile attitude towards the other communities of India with due regard to the protection of their political interests.

(4) That the Mussulmans as a body would keep themselves aloof from the National Congress as its demands of a representative system of Government and competition in public services, were injurious to both Mussulmans and the Government, etc. etc.

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk toured Northern India. A consensus developed for the formation of a political organisation.

The Lucknow meeting of the Muslims, a hurriedly convened one, was composed of the representatives of the Punjab, Oudh and Bihar. Muslims of other provinces were not invited to participate in it. It was, therefore, not favourably received by the Muslims of other provinces. A. M. Bhimjee of Bombay questioned the validity of the meeting held at Lucknow on the ground that it did not have an All-India character as Mussulmans of Bombay, Bengal, Madras and Sindh were not invited to attend it. He condemned the resolutions adopted by the Lucknow meeting and asked the leaders of that conference how could the resolutions passed at Lucknow be acceptable to the people of other provinces and presidencies who were not consulted. He also objected to the resolutions relating to the representative government and competitive examinations. He was at a loss to identify and understand the political matters in which the Mussulmans were not interested along with the other communities of India. The aloofness of the Muslims was also a subject of criticism in the Press. The *Bengalee* lamented the Muslim backwardness in political matters which was injurious to both Hindus and Mussulmans, but hoped that as the education would develop they 'will cast off from them the prejudice which now limit and circumscribe their political vision' and which prevented them from joining the great national movement which was slowly attracting them.

Badruddin Tyabji who presided over the Annual Session of the Mahommedan Educational Conference of 1903 at Bombay also, in his Presidential Address, said that he firmly believed that the two national institutions—the Congress and the Conference—should work hand in hand

for political and educational advancement of the Mussulmans and there was no reason why they should not work in peace and harmony. Kazi Kabiruddin, a noted barrister of Bombay, also shared the views of Tyabji and thought likewise. He wanted that the date of the Mahommedan Educational Conference to be held that year in Bombay should be altered as to make it convenient for the educated Muslims to attend the Congress session proposed to be held in Bombay. But Mohsin-ul-Mulk did not reconcile to this suggestion and wrote back to Kazi Kabiruddin that his idea had given him 'much food for laughter'. He quoted an Arabic proverb which says that 'genuine love makes a man deaf and blind'. This was much deplored by the enlightened Mussulmans and the Kazi. An article entitled 'Mahommedans and Politics' was contributed in the *Hindustan Review* by Haider Ali Qureshi, supporting the views of Kazi Kabiruddin and Tyabji and condemning the isolation of his co-religionists from the political agitation launched by the Hindus. But it was not cared for.

These differences in the views of the people of the north and south were not based on any hostility towards the Hindus. It was due to their educational disparity and economic backwardness. The bourgeoise had developed in the Muslims of the south but the Muslims of the north were still lacking in it. This is apparent from the speeches and writings of the Muslim leaders of south and north. The progressive section of the Muslims of Bombay had elected a Hindu gentleman of the eminence of Rao Bahadur Lala Shankar Uma Shankar as Vice-President of Bombay Presidency Mahommedan Educational Conference to be held at Ahmedabad. But the Muslims of north could hardly imagine of taking such a step. However, a certain section of Muslims expressed its willingness for the formation of a Muslim political association. Moulvi Abdulla Jan, addressing a meeting of Saharanpur Mussulmans who had assembled to hear Viqar-ul-Mulk, said that the time had come for Indian Mussulmans to agitate for their rights and to form a recognised and respectable body to defend themselves against the encroachment of other communities. They now found that it was necessary to work unitedly to gain political concessions from the government for the preservation of their community. 'The two points', he said, 'on which the proposed Mussulman Congress would differ from the Indian National Congress were the demand for representative Government and for public appointments by open competition, as being injurious to Mahommedans. What they wanted was a certain number of seats in the Legislative Councils and Municipal Boards, and of public appointments reserved, not in proportion to their numerical strength, but in proportion to their education and position, within particular territorial areas.'

The idea of the formation of a political organisation had already been welcomed by the *Tribune* which in its editorial 'Muslims and Politics' commended the Muslims and called it 'a very good sign' of the time though it regretted its being exclusively for the Muslims.

To Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk the idea of a political association of the Muslims was of no minor significance. It would revolutionise the thinking of the whole

community. In a letter to the editor of the *Pioneer*, he explained that the two movements were different, not only in their objects but also in their *modus operandi*. Paying tribute to Sir Syed he said that even the great saviour in 1893 started the Defence Association with the object of defending Muslim interests as against the other conflicting interests in the country. 'We believe that at the present stage of our progress of all the political needs the greatest is to teach the people to have complete confidence and trust in the Government and in its benign intention and we further believe that to constitute ourselves into a sort of opposition and criticise every action of the Government is not conducive to the attainment of public agitation as a means of securing our political object,' he concluded.

The *Aligarh Institute Gazette* also took the same plea. It asserted that the proposed Mahommedan organisation would interpret to the masses the intentions of the government. While occasion for the representation of grievances and demands would be few and far between, they would have to work continually and consistently. which led the masses to take a distorted view of the government's intention.

But the Muslims were still very hesitant to deviate from the guide-line prescribed for them by Sir Syed. Though, by the efforts of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk and other leading Mussulmans, a Mahommedan Political Association was formed with its branches all over the northern India, yet these branches were not active, and were calculated to indicate the displeasure and dissatisfaction of the Muslims vis-a-vis the policies of the British rulers in India.

What activised the Muslims politically was the partition of Bengal in October 1905 which was intended to carve out a new province for the Muslims where they would form a majority. To George Nathaniel Curzon, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, the Indian administration was cumbersome, dilatory and verbose. Want of proper supervision in many departments prevailed and 'the detachment and independent of local Governors and Government' presented a 'serious challenge to the Viceroy's authority and control.'

Curzon was an imperialist. To him expansion for Great Britain meant its sheer existence; while contraction would signify its decay. For the British politicians this had become their accepted creed and Curzon was the upholder of this doctrine in India. He viewed the Indian national movement with great hostility but refused to take it seriously. He also failed to realise the truth of Lord Salisbury's warning that the truest friends of British rule in India were those who won the people by their generous deeds and that the worst enemies of the British rule in India were those who lost their confidence by unsympathetic treatment. When Sir William Wedderburn tried to win him in favour of the Congress, the Viceroy wrote to the Secretary of State : 'Now I am not going to be tempted into anything of the sort. My own belief is that the Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise.' It was the growing nationalism in the educated Indians specially in Bengal which frightened him and he devoted himself to the task of checking of the rising tide.

In 1885, when the Congress was founded, the attitude of the government was friendly towards it. In 1888, it became hostile. Between 1889 and 1895, it alternated between friendliness and hostility, and after 1898 the Congress and the government were never friendly to each other. Curzon tried his level best to turn the tide of the national movement represented by the Congress. This happened to be his main concern since he landed in India, and with a view to weakening it he planned the partition of Bengal which was taking a lead in all national activities. This appears from one of his letters, he wrote to the Secretary of State : 'Calcutta is the centre', he said, 'from where the Congress Party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal, and indeed the whole of India. Its best wire-pullers and its most frothy orators all reside here. The perfection of their machinery and the tyranny which enables them to exercise are truly remarkable. They dominate public opinion in Calcutta; they affect the High Court, they frighten the local government; they are sometimes not without serious influence upon the Government of India. The whole of their activity is directed to creating an agency so powerful that they may one day be able to force a weak Government to give them what they desire.' He thought that in order to weaken such a powerful centre of intrigue, partition of Bengal was essential. Besides, there were some administrative reasons also. However, it would be unjust to Curzon not to mention that the scheme of the partition of Bengal was lying in the Government secretariat since 1853 and the Governor-General felt that the Government of Bengal alone imposed upon him 'a burden which in its present mass is more than mortal man can fitly bear.'

Bengal was partitioned in October 1905 which led to anti-Muslim and anti-Government demonstration all over Bengal. This agitation was based on the assumption that partition was intended to give the Mussulmans more power in the new province. This was so strongly urged by many of the leaders that it took practically the form of an anti-Mahommedan movement. In almost all his fortnightly reports to Minto, L. Hare, the Lieutenant-Governor invariably accused the Hindus for their arrogance and fondness to irritate the Mussulmans. The Muslims found themselves quite insecure and wanted an organisation to present their views before the government.

The leadership of the Muslims was still in the hands of land-holders and upper-classes who were very slow to take revolutionary steps because of their vested interests. But the middle class Muslims wanted some definite steps to be taken. 'Unless a miracle of reform', says Mohsin-ul-Mulk, 'speedily occurs, we Muslims are doomed to extinction, and we shall have deserved our fate.' Lady Minto also admits that 'the younger generations were wavering, inclined to throw in their lot with the advanced agitators of the Congress, then came Fuller's resignation. A howl went up that the loyal Mahommedans were not to be supported and that the agitators were to obtain their demands through agitation.'

The *Aligarh Institute Gazette* also now criticised the government policy of favouring the Hindus and commented, 'Whilst honour of gracious mark of recognition have followed the visits of Their Royal Highness to almost every part of India, up to the present time, no such substantial mark of favour has

been bestowed upon the patrons of Aligarh. Again at Madras three of the Reception Committees were selected for presentation of His Royal Highness—a European, a Hindu and a Mahommedan. The former were decorated, but the latter was left unnoticed. Can it therefore be a matter of surprise that this non-recognition of large proportion of Indian population should cause dissatisfaction ? It is the hope of reward that sweetens labour, but if reward is bestowed upon agitators only, what wonder if the Mahommedans say : 'Let us join the ranks of the agitators and share in their reward', with the result that at the present moment there are thousands of Mahommedans who have joined the Congress, men who ten or twelve years ago, would not have thought of doing so....' This indicates that the Muslim middle-class had started thinking otherwise and they believed that the time had come when they should point out to the government the loyalty of the Muslims and press their immediate demands. Reuter, wiring the summary of an article to the *Times* said : 'If the Indian Government does not retain the confidence of loyal Mahommedans, they may expect to see Mahommedans join the Congress or set up an agitation of their own.'

III

At this moment the British Home politics manifested a change. Lord Minto, who had returned to England in November 1904 having completed six years of Governor-Generalship of Canada was offered the Viceroyalty of India. Lord Minto left England on 2 November 1905, reached Bombay on 17 November and assumed the office of the Viceroy on 30 November 1905 in the most dismal period of Indian history.

Within a few weeks of Minto's assumption of the new office, the general election in England changed the course of politics. Mr. Balfour and the Conservative cabinet resigned and the Liberals. with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister, came to power. John Morley was appointed the Secretary of State for India in place of St. John Brodrick who, annoyed with Curzon's policy, had hoped to fulfil his plan for India in collaboration with Minto and regretfully wrote to him : 'One thing which I deeply regret to leave this office just at the moment when the work has become really pleasant in its relation to the Viceroy.' Morley communicated to Minto the news about the political change in England and wrote : 'I feel no doubt whatever that even if differences of opinion should arise, they will not affect the comfort or cordiality of our relations. The conversations we had when you so kindly sheltered me at Ottawa last year convince me that we speak the same political language, even though we may not always say precisely the same thing.'

But differences of opinion between the Liberal Secretary and the Conservative Viceroy were bound to arise. Morley believed that the principles of policy were to be had from the Secretary. 'The Indian Viceroy is not bound to know political philosophy or juristic theory or constitutional history, he is first and foremost an administrator, and the working head of a complicated

civil and military service.' While Minto believed otherwise. To him a man at the helm of affairs was more competent than a man who was thousands and thousands miles away from India. How should India be ruled ? Was it to be ruled by a Liberal Secretary of State or a Conservative Governor-General was the controversial issue that dominated the period of their regime. The conflicts within the nature and thinking of these two men are clear from the fact that Morley's intervention in Indian administration started within a couple of months of their assumption of offices. Morley became more autocratic and exacting. A constant stream of telegrams and despatches demanding minute information on every detail began pouring into his office and Minto was constrained to write to his brother in England, 'I used to imagine that the Secretary of State only aimed at directing great principles of Indian policy, and that the administration of the country rested with the Government of India, but there is intervention in everything, and its only result is intense worry for the Viceroy, as, do what he will, the Secretary of State cannot administer India.'

With all these differences, the rising Indian nationalism was the main concern of both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. Morley's budget speech in the House for the introduction of some constitutional reforms in India was meant to pacify the agitators. This speech created a widespread awakening among the Muslims who thought that the iron was hot and they must strike now.

A Muslim deputation was envisaged to be organised to wait upon Lord Minto to put their demands in the new framework as mentioned by Lord Morley in his budgetary speech. The Honorary Secretary of the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, had ever since been considered as the leader of the Muslims in India. During his life-time, Sir Syed held this responsible office and over-strained himself with all the responsibilities that were due to him. Mohsin-ul-Mulk succeeded Sir Syed and, therefore, as the leader of the community, undertook all the responsibilities that were entrusted to him. As soon as Morley's announcement was flashed out, Muslim intellectuals like Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, barrister of Aligarh, Sardar Yar Mahommed Khan, Vazir of Jaora State, Haji Mahommed Ismail, Rais of Datawli etc., wrote to Mohsin-ul-Mulk about the change that awaited India in the wake of the budgetary speech of Lord Morley and pressed him to organise a deputation to acquaint the Viceroy with the Muslim grievances. Mohsin-ul-Mulk agreed. Correspondence between Mohsin-ul-Mulk, and Archbold, Principal, M.A.O. College, Aligarh, who was staying at that time in Simla, the summer capital of the Government of India, started. Archbold further corresponded with Dunlop Smith, the Private Secertary of the Viceroy. The outcome of this correspondence was the Simla Deputation of October 1906 which presented an address to the Viceroy, high-lighting their genuine demands and asking for a favourable consideration.

The correspondence between Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Principal Archbold and Dunlop Smith has confused many a writer on the issue of the formation of the Simla Deputation. Most of the writers have called it a 'Command

Performance' and have attributed the subsequent formation of the Muslim League to the British statesmanship. This is a wrong estimate of Muslim political aspirations. The detailed correspondence (as cited in the present volume as well) between Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Archbold leaves no doubt of its being purely an outcome of Muslim political consciousness. Mohsin-ul-Mulk had all the qualities of a good leader and his first letter to Archbold which has been totally ignored by writers clearly reveals his independence, far-sightedness, political acumen and awareness of Muslim sentiments. This correspondence and a short history of political development if assessed in its entirety, also reveals that pressed by the rising forces of Muslim agitation, Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote to the Principal, asking him to correspond on his behalf with Dunlop Smith, the Secretary to the Viceroy. This correspondence further suggests that neither Mohsin-ul-Mulk was being prompted by the Government of India, nor the inspiration for the deputation came from Simla. Archbold's presence in Simla undoubtedly facilitated the job and arranged the meeting, but to say that Simla Deputation was a 'Command Performance' is to underestimate Muslim political aspirations. Moreover lady Minto's acceptance that, 'the younger generation (of Mahommedans) were wavering, inclined to throw in their lot with the advanced agitators of the Congress...decided, before taking action, to bring an Address before the Viceroy, mentioning their grievances, is a conclusive evidence that the Simla Deputation was sponsored by the Muslim intelligentsia and the Viceroy was bound to receive it, as he feared, lest it might throw its lot with the Congress agitators. Stanlay Wolpert in his book entitled *Morley and India* says that Mohsin-ul-Mulk's idea of submitting a Muslim memorial to Minto was not entirely his own; yet there is no clear evidence as to whether his initial advisors in this matter were Muslim Indians or English.' Thus the author does not seem to be clear in his own mind whether the memorial was the creation of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's vision or it was the work of the British diplomacy. But this correspondence should not leave any iota of doubt regarding the intention of the deputationists and the role of the government.

After the Simla Deputation, the influential Muslims unanimously agreed to form an association with a view to safeguarding the interests of their community in India. At first the idea of the formation of the League was pooh-poohed in some quarters and it did not receive any response but gradually and steadily the Muslim circles realised the necessity of a political organisation. Having finished his business in Simla, the Aga Khan on 4 October 1906, wrote to Nawab of Dacca a letter which is reproduced below :

> Perhaps I may be allowed as one who took part in the recent Deputation to H.E. the Viceroy to make a few suggestions as to the future. The whole of the Mahommedan community have taken the keenest interest in the movement and they look to us to try our best to secure that the objects which were set forth in the address may be ultimately secured.
>
> It may be well that the Provincial Associations should be formed with the aim of safeguarding the political interests of Mahommedans in the various portions of India, and similarly some central organisation for the whole. On these matters I do not wish to pronounce an opinion. They are best

left, I think, to the discretion of the leaders in the days that are to come. But as the Deputation was formed with a view to the securing of certain definite objects of the most vital interest to Mahommedans as a whole. I venture to regard its work as begun only, and it seems to me from every point that it should *without delay* continue its labour until complete success has crowned its efforts. To this end I would suggest that the Deputation which presented the address resolve itself into a Committee to endeavour to obtain the granting of the various prayers which the address embodied. This Mahommedan Committee for the completion of the work of the Deputation might, if it were thought necessary, add to its numbers, though I would suggest, in the interest of the rapid carrying out of its business, that this should be done sparingly. I am sure also that I express what is the wish of all my fellow-Mahommedans when I ask you to continue to act as secretary of this Committee.

Please circulate my letter among the members of the Deputation.

Thus the Aga Khan impressed upon the Muslims the necessity of founding a Muslim Association. Meanwhile Nawab Sir Salimullah Khan of Dacca, sent a memorandum to his fellow Mahommedans asking them for the formation of an All-India Muslim Confederacy. He requested Mohsin-ul-Mulk to call the Annual Session of the All-India Mahommedan Educational Conference at Dacca that year whose concluding session, he begged, to be converted into a political gathering because of the presence of Muslim elite to discuss the formation of the Muslim political association. Mohsin-ul-Mulk disagreed to this as he did not wish to discuss the political questions in any of the sessions of the Mahommedan Educational Conference. However, when the Conference was over, it was changed into a political one. On 30 December 1906, under the chairmanship of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk it discussed the formation of a political association and the All-India Muslim League was founded.

In his presidential speech Viqar-ul-Mulk warned the government servants to abstain from attending the meeting which was purely political. Since then the question whether or not Mahommedans who were government servants could join or take part in any political meeting or demonstration, engaged the attention of the educated Muslims. The Home Department Circular No. 11-Public, 679-88 dated 16 March 1890 (vide the Government Servant's Conduct Rules) said : 'A Government servant may not take part in any political agitation or meeting, or attend any political meeting, his presence at which is likely to be misconstrued or to impair his public usefulness.'

There is nothing in the rule which prevented the government servants to keep themselves aloof from political demonstration. Besides, no reasonable objection could be raised against a government servant, joining political meetings. 'As long as', the *Pioneer* wrote, 'they do not participate in political movement directed against the administration they have nothing to fear.... The Mahommedan community is backward and a small community, and of the few educated and enlightened men it produces every year, the major portion is attracted to Government service. It would indeed be cruel and undiplomatic to prevent them from participating in such political movements as only concern their own community and at the same time go not against

the British Government.' This cleared the issue. Government servants also participated in the discussions of the League and made suggestions for furthering the interests of Muslims as well as those of the government.

In the first few years the League had a meagre following. It still retained the character of a group of well-to-do and aristocratic Mussulmans 'to keep the Moslem intelligentsia and middle classes away from the dangerous politics on which the Indian National Congress was just then embarking.' It was realised that no substantial progress would be achieved until it was made a mass movement. An English Press which could popularise the movement both in India and England was considered essential. Mr. Yahya-en-nasr Parkinson, a converted Muslim, realising its importance wrote that to make known the Muslim standpoint to the vast majority of the inhabitants of the British Isles, the foundation of a Press was essential. Moulvi Yaqoob Ali also appealed to all the editors of the Islamic papers to start Muslim Press Association to give wide publicity to the Muslim news. The result of all these efforts was that numerous such associations cropped up in India which helped in engendering consciousness among the Muslims.

CONTENTS

SECTION 2

PARTITION OF BENGAL

SECTION 3

SIMLA DEPUTATION AND THE FORMATION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

SECTION 1

MUSLIMS AND POLITICAL AGITATION

1

LETTER FROM ALFRED NUNDY TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

It is an open secret that the attitude of the Mahommedans towards the Indian National Congress has undergone a change within the last one year or two, though there is no foundation for the rumour which of late has found currency in some quarters that the members of this community intended setting up a congress of their own dealing with political matters. I may be permitted to speak with some authority on this subject as during the last eight months I have made a tour through a good part of India, and have therefore had peculiar facilities of gauging the feelings of various classes especially as regards the question. Going as an accredited official of the Congress I was bound to receive a certain amount of consideration and attention from the Hindus, but I was surprised at the sympathetic attitude of the Mahommedans, which was displayed not only in their relations towards me, but in a more practical form by substantial donations to the funds of the Indian National Congress. It is worth while considering what has brought about this change of attitude from active resistance to one of passive quiescence, to put it in the mildest form. I may at once say I attach very little importance to public meetings got up by political wire pullers to protest against the Congress. A great demonstration was made at Lucknow last year, when at a public meeting at which a notable Mahommedan Raja presided, strong resolutions were passed against this political movement, but whilst the Congress was in session a gentleman who occupies a high position in Moslem society and had taken an active part in the anti-Congress meeting invited the president and the leaders of the Congress from different parts of India to a sumptuous dinner, at which some Europeans and a good many notable Mahommedans were present, and sympathetic speeches were the order of the day. This was twelve months ago, but since then forces have been at work which are impelling the Mahommedans to drop their attitude of hostility and be more outspoken and active in their sympathy towards the Hindus. About a couple of months ago the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who deservedly is considered the leader of the Mahommedans in these Provinces, stated in a public meeting that for the Hindus and Mahommedans 'to prosper without union is almost impossible', and 'God willing a time will come when each of the two communities setting aside their partial difference will work towards the improvement of their country's state.' At the same meeting, the Nawab Fateh Newaz Jung stated that there was a growing desire on the part of the Mahommedans to take part in political agitations, and that 'a time was coming when Mahommedans

would come into the fold of the Congress, at least from both conservative and liberal parties a unionist party will emanate, devoted to the interest of the country and bound up by common ideals.'

It would be incorrect to suppose that the Mahommedans of all parts of India were hostile to the Congress. Two of the former Presidents were the Hon. Justice Budruddin Tyabji and the Hon. R. M. Sayani, who both hail from Bombay, and as regards that Presidency it may safely be said of the followers of the Prophet that they are in sympathy with this political movement. Nor has there been at any time any display of active opposition on the part of Madras Mahommedans towards the Congress. The Bengal Presidency alone therefore remains to be considered. Some years ago I had a conversation with one of the leaders of the Mahommedans in Calcutta, now occuping a high position under Government, and He assured me that up to the last moment there was every prospect of the members of that community taking part in the second National Congress held in that city, but that a strongly worded telegram from Sir Syed Ahmed Khan turned the scale, so that as a matter of fact we trace back to that astute politician the hostile attitude of the Mahommedans to the Congress. And here we are met by the curious fact that though in later years Sir Syed Ahmed based his opposition to the Congress mainly with reference to two resolutions relating to representations in the Councils and simultaneous examination in India for the Civil and other services, at one time before the Congress came to the front he had himself formulated these identical demands. How he came to alter his opinions was to a great extent due to other considerations. Sir Auckland Colvin was then Lieutenant-Governor of these Provinces, and he in common with Lord Dufferin entertained certain misgivings about the aims and objects of the Congress. He at the same time held some peculiar views of the claims of and the consideration due to the Mahommedans as regards their employment in the public services. Sir Syed had clearly then before him two alternatives, either to join the Congress and alienate the sympathies of Sir Aucklan l or keep aloof from it and partake of the good things of which the Lieutenant-Governor had a plentiful store. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, so we need not wonder at the decision arrived at by the Aligarh politician, especially as there was no flagrant sacrifice of principle. For though a man may advocate certain measures in the abstract he may easily persuade himself he had conscientious scruples to these being carried out under such conditions as would raise doubts as to the accrual of the advantages he had hoped for. A person so highly gifted as was Sir Syed Ahmed, and so keenly desirous for the welfare of his people, was bound to look at every aspect of the question, and as he found an opportunity of securing something which would tend to ameliorate their existing backward condition, he readily availed himself of it, instead of waiting for a prospective and problematical advantage. The resolution once taken he strove to the utmost to make the best of the position. The Mahommedans under his leadership laid claims to a monopoly of loyalty

to the British Government as distinguished from the Hindus, who were credited with notions likely to subvert that power and what could be more natural under the circumstances than that he should propose a partnership between the Anglo-Indians and the Mahommedans, for the promotion of their respective interests. If the Anglo-Mahommedan Patriotic Association came to an untimely end, it was no fault of Sir Syed, but was due to the good sense of the English people, who soon realised the unfairness and absurdity of joining hands with a community which was in the minority to oppose what might perhaps be the just demands of the majority. For a time the wisdom of the Aligarh sage was not questioned by his followers, for they basked in the smiles of a paternal Government, which bestowed upon its petted children title, privileges of sorts, and high appointments of various kinds apart from any considerations of merit. But alas, times have changed ! The favours and privileges are diminishing in number and value. A Governor like Sir Antony MacDonnel has methods of calculating which Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and others who were brought up in Sir Auckland Colvin's school cannot understand and cannot approve. The former Lieutenant-Governor divided an apple into two and gave half and probably the better half to the Mahommedans and the other half to the Hindus. The present head of the Local Government thinks that three parts out of five ought to satisfy the most exacting of the followers of the Prophet. And so far as representation in the Councils is concerned what has the Mahommedans gained by abstaining from joining the Hindus in their political movement. The demands of the Congress have been conceded so far that the people are allowed to elect their representatives, but with what face can the Mahommedan ask the Hindus to give him their votes, when in season and out of season he has abused them and has done his best to prevent the granting of this privilege. True enough the Government charitably comes to the aid of the Mahommedans but the better educated and more thoughtful amongst them have come to realise the fact that dependence on charity is neither a pleasant nor a satisfactory position. And of what avail has been their opposition to competitive examinations for every local Government has recognised this system in some form or other so far as the higher appointments in the services is concerned. And to crown it all the movement they refused to join on the score of its reactionary and seditious tendencies is now not only tolerated but was pronounced by a Viceroy to be a legitimate movement occupying in India the position taken up by the opposition party in England, and some of its leaders are reckoned amongst the most loyal and trusted advisers of Government. Alas, for the vanity of human hopes. Much was anticipated by Sir Syed and his supporters from the manner in which he had played his cards—but these are now very dubious if the game will be won by them. Not only is the Hindu progressing without their aid but is turning aggressive towards them, with the help of that very Government which had felled them once. The Nagri notification has been a sad blow to the Mahommedans, and has set them

cogitating. A well-known anti-Congress leader pathetically remarked that he felt sure if his community had kept in touch with the Hindus, this question would never have come to the front. 'Probably not', I said, 'but surely you cannot complain of the attitude of the Hindus.' 'No', he replied, 'we are but reaping what we have sown.'

But perhaps what vexes the Mahommedans most is the fact that they have been found out. They had sworn by all the prophets and angels that nothing under heaven was more obnoxious to them than political agitation, so convinced were they of justice and fairness of the British Government, and yet on but slight provocation to accept their own version, they have held demonstrations against Government, and made serious imputations questioning its motives and impartiality. Under these circumstances can it be wondered that these good people should deem it advisable to reconsider their attitude towards the Hindus. I think not, and the Nawab Mehdi Hasan has only given expression to sentiments which are surely entertained by many of his co-religionists.

Source : The Pioneer, 9 December 1900.

2

LETTER FROM AFTAB TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

I have read the letter of Mr. Nundy, the well known agent of the Indian National Congress, in your issue of 9th instant. One may be permitted to assume that he has penned this document in the performance of his function 'as an accredited official of the Congress.' As such, his courteous remarks about the motives of the late Sir Syed and the present attitude of the Mahommedans of these Provinces do not deserve serious consideration. But he has made certain statements which cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. He has been pleased to insinuate that the Mahommedans has been tempted to follow the late Sir Syed because of the favours which Sir Auckland Colvin had showered upon them; and that now, under the just and impartial rule of His Honour the present Lieutenant-Governor, they have receded from that course and have assumed an attitude of hostility to the Government. Mr. Nundy was not content with mere assertions; and had he done so, no one would have grudged him the satisfaction of having abused Sir Syed and his followers. He has been pleased to quote the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and the Nawab Mehdi Hasan in support of his contention that the Mahommedans were now anxious to enter the Congress fold. Whether the Nawab Mehdi Hasan

has said anything which might justify the inference of Mr. Nundy I do not know. But if he has said anything he alone is responsible and must be taken to speak for himself only. As to the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk I may well claim to be fully acquainted with his views on the subject, and may assure Mr. Nundy that his assumption of the Nawab's attitude and his deductions therefrom are entirely unfounded. I have no doubt that the Nawab himself will be able to satisfy Mr. Nundy on this point.

The action of the Mahommedans of these Provinces with regard to the Government Hindi Resolution has given a handle to their ill-wishers to represent it in the blackest light. They are said to have assumed an attitude of hostility to the Government. One may fairly feel the injustice of such malicious misrepresentation of a nation's attitude. If the magistrate of a district passes an ex-parte order allowing some Hindu procession to which the Mahommedans of the locality object, sincerely believing that such order would interfere with their rights; and if to represent their cause they go to the Magistrate in a body and present their application of objections, would it be fair to call such an action as 'hostility to the Government' ? What have the Mahommedans done except representing their objections to the order in question, which they rightly or wrongly believe to be injurious to the interests of their community. Who are the parties to this dispute ? Surely the Hindi Advocates of Nagri on the one hand and the Mahommedans on the other, and not the Mahommedans versus the Government. Whatever the Mahommedans have done, they have done simply and solely in self-defence as against the opposite party : namely the Hindu advocates of Nagri. There are always disputes between the Hindus and the Mahommedans, arising out of their conflicting interests, which are decided by the administrators of the country. It is seldom that both parties are satisfied with the decision, and if the losing party objects or applies for review or appeals, will such an action be declared to be 'hostility to the Government.' Did the Mahommedans adopt any improper course which was open to them under the circumstances. They expressed their objections by means of public meetings held and conducted in the most constitutional manner. And events have shown that even the numerous public meetings, which have been called by the name of 'political agitation.' Were not sufficient to satisfy the authorities that the movement had the sympathy and support of the whole community for it is said that this agitation was started and carried on only by some members of the bar. This clearly shows that if the Mahommedans, as a community, felt on this subject, as they undoubtedly did, they ought to have tried to bring this fact home to the authorities concerned; and how could they have done this except by holding larger and more numerous public meetings and presenting greater number of memorials. But those who are acquainted with the disorganised and backward condition of the Mahommedans can understand the reason why inspite of a general dissatisfaction, there has been so late and so little protest against the order in question. It is not my purpose to discuss the question

whether the Mahommedans are right or wrong in their belief that the Hindi Resolution would be injurious to them. What I protest most strongly against is the attempt to seize this opportunity to represent that the boasted loyalty of the Mahommedans had dissolved under the rays of Sir Antony MacDonnell's just rule, and that throwing off the cloak of their time-serving loyalty they have openly entered the arena of political agitation against the Government. Nothing could be more untrue, more unjust, and more unfounded. I have no doubt that the tactics of Mr. Nundy and his friends will before long, find their way to appellate courts, where the respondent's counsel need only argue that the appellant's conduct in being dissatisfied with the order of the Lower Court was conclusive proof of his 'hostility to the Government', and therefore his appeal should be dismissed.

Mr. Nundy seems to be alarmed at the prospect of the Mahommedans being driven into the Congress fold by the frowning treatment of the present head of these Provinces. Time will show that his fears are unfounded. In spite of his insinuation as to the motives of Sir Syed's policy every impartial man will admit that his opposition to the Congress was not based on flattery or a desire to please any particular Governor, but upon reasons which had far deeper roots—reasons which made him apprehend the ultimate fate of his country. It was a question purely of self-preservation. Mr. Nundy, 'the accredited official of the Congress', has now publicly interdicted the Mahommedans from entering the Legislative Councils—the future parliaments of India (according to the dreams of the Congress itself). What greater justification there could be for Sir Syed's apprehensions as to the attitude of the Congress towards the Mahommedans interests. The policy of Sir Syed cannot be affected or altered by any particular measure or resolution of the Government. It may be right or wrong, I am not prepared to discuss this question at present. But I have not the slightest doubt that it was determined by the peculiar situation of the Mahommedans in this country, and not by pleasure, or displeasure with the treatment of any individual Government.

The Mahommedans of the present day are undoubtedly backward and poor; but with all their backwardness and poverty they have still left some sense of self-respect and honour. In the eyes of Mr. Nundy they may count for nothing—they may be hypocrites and negligible minority. But this is not their own estimate. They realise their situation in the country, they understand the position, they occupy under the present rule, and they are endeavouring to know the service they can render, in their own humble way, to the great British Empire. They are not ashamed to call themselves loyal subjects of the British Crown, when they know that their loyalty is based upon their own interest, an honest appreciation of the blessings of British rule and well-reasoned convictions. Inspite of Mr. Nundy and his friends the Mahommedans will continue to carry on their national work in the same spirit and on the same lines which Sir Syed has left clearly marked out for them.

Source : The Pioneer, 20 December 1900.

3

LETTER FROM THEODORE MORRISON TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

Will you allow me to correct misapprehension which may arise from the perusal of Mr. Alfred Nundy's letter both as regards Sir Syed Ahmed himself and his successors in Aligarh with respect to political agitation. I had the good fortune to be on terms of intimacy with Sir Syed Ahmed and I can say with confidence that he was not in the habit of calculating how he could turn a serious political question to the advantage of his own community, nor was to the his opposition political programme of the National Congress the result of a compact expressed or understood with Sir Aukland Colvin's Government. I can also assert with confidence that the recent events to which Mr. Nundy refers have not in the smallest degree altered the views of Sir Syed's successors upon political questions. The views held by Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and the Mahommedans of Aligarh may be summed up as follows: The chief plank in the Congress platform has always been representative institutions for India. Now representative institutions can only be worked by people of one nationality or as Mill puts it, 'Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities.' The different communities which divide the land of India between them, the Hindus, the Parsis, the Sikhs, the Mahommedans are not component parts of one nation but distinct and some times antagonistic nationalities. And not only would representative Government be impossible among such mutually antagonistic groups, but the introduction of even a tentative measure of representation would do positive harm by accentuating and perpetuating the unfortunate animosities which Mr. Nundy and every public-spirited statesman must deplore. Representative institutions would do harm in this way. An inevitable result of representative Government is the formation of parties, and where the electors are not held together by the bond of common nationality, these parties will inevitably be formed upon the lines of racial or religious antipathy; political controversy which is the breath of English public life will in India only embitter the deplorable hostility of Hindus and Mahommedans. I know of no municipality in India in which the electors are divided upon political principles, but I can point to very many in which municipal elections are used to foment the existing jeolousy of Hindus and Mahommedans. I am entirely at one with Mr. Nundy in earnestly desiring the conciliation of these two communities, but I entirely disagree with him as to the means whereby it can be affected; the way pointed out by the Congress seems to me to lead in exactly the opposite direction, and to breed not harmony but strife. Sir Syed believed that the best hope of reconciling the two communities lay in maintaining the autocracy of the British Government intact. This was also the

opinion of John Stuart Mill and as politicians of the Congress have always professed the highest reverence for his political teaching, I venture to quote his words. In talking of the case in which the obstacle to the blending of nationalities are greatest he says : 'When nations thus divided are under a despotic Government which is a stranger to all of them.... In the course of a few generations identity of situation often produces harmony of feelings and the different races come to feel each other as fellow countrymen, particularly if they are dispersed over the same track of country. But if the era of aspiration to free Government arrives before this fusion has been effected, the opportunity has gone by for effecting it.' In the last sentence Mill foresees the irremediable harm which may be done by a pre-mature introduction of representative Government and has by anticipation emphatically condemned the policy of the National Congress.

This is the intellectual basis of that loyalty to the British Government which Mahommedans also believe to be a religious obligation; and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk would not be worthy to sit in the seat of Sir Syed Ahmed did he not at all reasons enforce upon his co-religionists the importance of maintaining the autocracy of British Government intact. The loyalty of Sir Syed Ahmed and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk is not the outcome of a discreditable 'deal' nor is it based upon a sense of favours to come, but it rests upon political principles of fundamental importance. There are no doubt minds which cannot distinguish between such reasoned loyalty and flattery, and they inevitably jump to the conclusion that this loyalty will not survive the eclipse of official favour. I can only say that Syed Saheb's political teaching was not upon this sordid level and his disciples understand his statesmanship better than Mr. Nundy. With regard to the talk there has been in some quarters of founding a Mahommedans political association, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk strongly opposed the idea when it was promulgated and no such association has yet come into being. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk opposed the suggestion upon the grounds I have shortly recapitulated above and because it is his opinion, as it was Sir Syed's, that the Mahommedans for the generation atleast should devote their exclusive attention to education. Under the British Government their moral and material welfare is beyond all comparison more important than political privileges and in what but in education lies there any hope of improving their moral or material condition ? With Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's recent appearance in public to represent the views of his community upon the Urdu-Nagri question I will not now deal, as I understand that the Nawab is himself preparing his own reply for publication and that he will trustfully and with authority of the political views of the Mahommedans community: a necessity of translating his reply into English will cause some inevitable delay and I wish therefore to record this immediate protest in order that an aspersion upon the purety of Sir Syed Ahmed's political motives may not seem to pass unchallenged.

Source : The Pioneer, 17 December 1900.

4

LETTER FROM ALFRED NUNDY TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

I have never yet had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Morrison, but I met him once in the columns of the Pioneer two and a half years ago when he rushed in to the aid of his friend Mr. Beck, who had started the controversy as to whether India is growing richer. I find that I then wrote of Mr. Morrison that he 'has no practical knowledge of the subject' and that he 'lays himself open to the charge that in his advocacy of a particular theory he rushes eagerly to set down any little fact he comes across in a book and which he thinks supports his contention.' Years have no doubt added to his learning as they have deservedly raised him to a higher and more responsible position that he once held but I regret that in the controversy about the Mahommedans and the Congress the two defects I had occasion to point out are still more flagrantly developed. My article in the Pioneer drew attention to certain facts to the effect that whereas the Mahommedans were once hostile to the Congress, they are now better disposed towards it and in support I quoted the statements of certain well-known leaders of that community. Mr. Morrison in reply quietly ignores the facts, but flings sundry volumes of Mill at my head. The gist of his argument is this 'Mill says, so and so, and I agree with him, hence the Mahommedans cannot possibly have any leanings towards the Congress—as if every Mahommedan was a walking edition of Mill, or held it in estimation as his own scriptures. When the Mahommedans complain that the Hindus send their representatives to the Councils, and that they cannot, that the Hindus have stolen a march over them in the Nagri question, and this because they were foolish enough to oppose them in their political aims, Mr. Morrison offers them the cold comfort of perusing a chapter here and another there from Mill. Can it be wondered that the Mahommedans should reply, 'Bother Mill and his theories ! Why should I not make peace with the Hindus ?'

Were it not that Mr. Morrison lacks a practical knowledge of the subjects, he would have seen that the best theories are contradicted by facts. In Bengal the Indian Christians live in harmony and sympathy with the Hindus, with the result that the Hon. Kali Charan Bannerji, though absolutely wanting in self-assertion was on the strength of his ability and merits elected a Member of Council and we have to-day the Hon. M.S. Das also a Christian representing the Cuttack division, and what is still more striking he has had this honour conferred on him for the second time. According to Mill no Christian could have had even an infinitesimal chance of being elected into the Council and if in this instance his theories are disproved the Mahommedan may well think to himself that he would have fared much better in this respect if he had remained in harmony with the Hindus

instead of trusting to Sir Syed Ahmed and Mill's theories. But if Mr. Morrison will only descend from the clouds and look at things as they exist in this world, he will find that this controversy as to representation in the Council is set to rest for the present, for I don't think there exists anyone so foolish as to imagine that the Government is likely for some years to come to grant any further concessions under this head, and it would be equally silly for anyone to suppose that the Government to gratify Mr. Morrison's admiration for Mill, or to please the Mahommedans, is likely to take away what it has alredy granted. That being so, might I ask why the Hindus and Mahommedans should not work together for their common welfare. Mr. Morrison professes to speak no behalf of the successors of Sir Syed Ahmed, *i. e.* for (1) Sir Antony MacDonnell, (2) Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, (3) that happy family of noblemen and gentlemen whom the strong hand of the Lieutenant-Governor keeps from making mince meat of each other, and the College too for the matter of that. Now Sir Antony MacDonnell is far too sagacious a Governor ever to give expression to the view that Hindus and Mahommedans should not combine for their mutual welfare. As regards the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, I was a fortnight ago the guest at Aligarh of my old and respected friend, and I know exactly what his views are on this subject, and he gave expression to them in the speech from which I quoted in my last article. The Nawab though one of the successors of Sir Syed Ahmed, has not thought it fit to adopt, or if he did adopt it once, has considered it expedient to discard one of the main principles of his predecessor, that Mahommedans should not take part in political agitations. Having once taken the lead in such an agitation—for the Nagri protest meeting was nothing if it was not political—it would be inconsistent on his part to try to withhold his followers who wish to go further and repudiate the principle altogether. As to that 'happy family', considering with reference to the management of the College about which there ought not to be any difference of opinion, each one entertains his own view, I may safely say, there is likely to be as great a divergence of opinion as to Mill's theories of representative Government. But supposing the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and the Aligarh 'happy family' entertained a particular opinion about the Congress, Mr. Morrison is very much mistaken if he imagines that the rest of the Mahommedans in India are going to act quietly under their dictation. As I said in my last letter they are disheartened and demoralised at present and each one will act independently of the other. How this question will be eventually solved is more than I can say, for I have no desire to dabble in theories and leave facts at a safe distance. I shall however look forward with interest to the Presidential speech of my old friend and tutor Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk at the Mahommedan Conference at Rampur, for some declaration on the point.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 December 1900.

5

LETTER FROM ALFRED NUNDY TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

I think I have waited long enough for the declaration of Mahommedan policy which Mr. Morrison said the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was about to publish. I have refrained from taking any notice of the letter of some one signing himself 'Aftab', for the simple reason that the issues raised in this question were far to be dealt with by anonymous correspondents who profess to speak on behalf of others more exalted but most concerned. But I shall deem it a favour if you will allow me a little space to close the controversy stated by me. To be clear I shall restate it in precise terms that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan for certain reasons given by me not only declined to join the Congress, but repeatedly announced that he disapproved of a political agitation, that now for certain reasons Mahommedans have come to believe that they must take part in political agitations for the relief of grievances, and that some of the leaders whose speeches I quoted had declared that there ought to be closer union between the Hindus and Mahommedans, one of them going so far as to say boldly that the latter ought to make common cause with the Congress. No attempt has been made to disprove any of these points, but rather they are confirmed by what appears in the *Moslem Chronicle* the organ of the Mahommedans of Bengal which says that : 'We may not agree with Mr. Alfred Nundy in all that he has said in his letter to the Pioneer of the 9th December. But it must be admitted that much of what is put in there, or a modified portion of the statement made, would be taken as what has conduced to make the attitude of the Mussulmans towards the Congress less inimical than it was before, and that their present position may thus be best described one of passive indifference.' The Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk whom I had specially challenged to make some declaration of the policy of Mahommedans also supports my views, as regards their newly adopted ideas in respect to political agitation. He says : 'I quite admit that in these modern days of enlightenment the people are entitled to criticise the acts of the Government and have some voice in the management of their own officers', the next of what he said is a string of platitudes, which I or any sensible man will readily endorse, not the less that particular remark that 'You cannot expect sensible men to listen with patience to the frothy eloquence of half-educated and irresponsible school boys.' Very sound advice indeed in these days when a number of minor conferences are springing up, where the school boy would like to air his eloquence. The point at issue is not so much whether the Mahommedans are going to join the Congress, but whether they are repudiating their oft-repeated assertions never to take part in any political agitation. If they are, they may join the Congress or do worse.

Source : The Pioneer, 20 January 1901.

6

LETTER FROM MAHDI ALI NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

From the mouth of a professed partisan of the Congress there is nothing new in the contention of Mr. Nundy that the Mussulmans are inclining to the policy of the National Congress, for ever since that body has been in existence it has been the object of its supporters to convince the world that the great body of the Mussulmans support its policy. In every annual report of the Congress it is said that many Mussulmans attend the meeting of the Congress, in order that they might convince such English politicians as take an interest in Indian affairs that the Congress was in reality a national one, and the genuine expression of the wishes of the mixed nationalities, which inhabit the continent of India. Nor again can any Mussulman be surprised at the use Mr. Nundy has made of the action of the Urdu Defence Association; he has seized this opportunity to misrepresent the attitude of the Mussulman community and to attribute to them a suspicion of the benevolent intentions of Government and a distrust of its impartiality. This is perfectly consistent with the traditional tactics of his party. Even Sir Syed Ahmed himself was not free from such attacks as this. On the occasion of certain differences of opinion betwe.n Mr. Syed Mahmood and the High Court of Allahabad, some papers in the Congress interest declared that Sir Syed Ahmed had entirely changed his policy and 'had become the enemy of the official world and all its works.' Sir Syed Ahmed himself did not care to answer such ill-founded rumours but his friends urged him that some Mussulmans might be misled by these misrepresentations and he was accordingly persuaded to publish an official contradiction of these reports in the Pioneer of the 22nd September 1893. If then a man so universally known and respected as Sir Syed could be so misrepresented what wonder if my own action with regard to the Urdu Defence Association has been distorted into agitation against the Government and a sympathy with the political methods of the Congress. Mr. Nundy is content with making this charge against me personally, but he has declared that the Mussulmans in general are drifting into political agitation. I believe that it will generally be conceded that I am more intimately acquainted with the thoughts and feelings of the Mussulman community than Mr. Nundy, and I say with confidence that their opinions with regard to the National Congress have not been altered one whit by recent events, and that they believe, as they believed in the past, that the policy which that body has initiated is beneficial neither to the country at large nor to their own community in particular, and they view the propaganda of Mr. Nundy and his friends with the greatest distrust. These are the opinions of my community and as long as they can distinguish good from evil, I can see no likelihood of their changing them.

I have been very busily engaged in educational matters connected with the M.A.O. College and the Mahommedan Educational Conference and I have not been able to find an opportunity of replying to Mr. Nundy's first letter. Educational questions in my opinion have for the Mussulman community a paramount claim and I could not forsake what I believe to be the first duty of a Mahommedan in my position to enter into merely political controversy. As the question has, however, assumed a factitious importance, I am preparing a series of articles upon the subject and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk has also prepared certain speeches and lectures which will I trust suffice to convince Mr. Nundy of the utter groundlessness of his views regarding the Mahommedans.

Though Sir Syed Ahmed is dead his opinions still live among his people and we who have shared his counsels and his lessons are not going to swerve one jot from the policy which he has convinced us is the best both for ourselves and the country. Such is the general opinion among the Mussulmans and an intelligent Mussulman who departed from the policy would excite in me the same feelings of surprise as a Mussulman who abandoned his faith and joined the congregation of the Arya Samaj.

Source : The Pioneer, 26 January 1901.

7

LETTER FROM IMAD-UL-MULK TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

My old friend Mr. Alfred Nundy has been at the trouble of informing the world in repeated communications to the Pioneer that the Mahommedans have changed their attitude towards the organisation that calls itself the Indian National Congress. I see no signs of such change of attitude. The great body of Mahommedans hold themselves aloof from the movement now, as they have wisely held themselves aloof from it from the outset. The methods of the Congress are and will always be, abhorrent to them. A people in whom the governing instinct is not yet quite extinct can never look with complaisance at the assumption of hostile attitude towards Government by the subject races. What is legitimate in England among a homogeneous people in the way of free and often violent criticism, takes the colour of sedition and incipient rebellion when transported to India. A native who conducted himself, as Mr. Stead and his congeners have conducted themselves of late on the Boer question, would deserve to be hanged out of hand, and as a matter of fact I am glad to think he would be so hanged. Now, the

difference between Mr. Stead's attitude and that of the Congress is one of degree not of kind. If the Congress movement had gone on as it began unchecked, the Viceroy would no doubt have had several dark-skined Steads and Parnells to deal with by this time. The production would have been in perfect accord with the Darwinian theory of evolution. Only it would have given rise to much more exciting scenes than did the Bombay trials, and led to a much more reactionary addition to the Statute Book than they necessitated. But happily the tendency towards violence was checked by an understanding that the Indian Government was willing to allow the subject races to play with edged tools so far and no further. We Mahommedans, do not care to play with edged tools at all. We think we are better employed in setting our own house in order. We have therefore made it our business to teach our political creed at Aligarh so that the rising generation should grow up in its doctrines which we deem to be sounder and much more patriotic than the doctrines taught by the Congress. Mr. Morrison is charged with this propoganda as was late Mr. Beck before him, and he has the authority of the leaders of the community to speak on their behalf, and he has their fullest confidence. We do not care to enter into a controversy, we are content to go our own way and look after our own affairs as seems best to us. If my friend Mr. Nundy is able in his new-born zeal to convert any Mahommedan to his creed we may regret it, but we cannot prevent him. Missionaries sometimes succeed in converting stray Mahommedans to Christianity.

Source : The Pioneer, 25 January 1901.

8

LETTER FROM ALFRED NUNDY TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

I thought I had done with the above controversy, but it seems that the best part of it has yet to come. The Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk has announced that 'I am preparing a series of articles upon the subject and Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk has also prepared certain speeches and lectures which will I trust suffice to convince Mr. Nundy of the utter groundlessness of his views.' I ought to feel, and do feel highly flattered. But as a preliminary canter both these gentlemen have unburdened themselves in the Pioneer and I trust you will permit me a little space to offer a few hints so as to make these 'articles' and 'lectures' and 'speeches' as complete and comprehensive as possible. In the first place I must say that it is only because I am an old friend and an ex-pupil of the Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk and have always entertained a deep

regard for him, and great respect for his high abilities that I notice his letter at all, for in my opinion anyone who indulges in abuse in the place of argument deserves to be left severely alone. To call a body of men whom he has not shown that they are not as good as himself, to call them seditious and guilty of incipient rebellion and deserving of being hanged, is sheer and unmitigated abuse and not in keeping with the high position of the Nawab. I will in charity put down this violent ebulition on his part to a fit of indigestion due to the kindly and well meant hospitality of our mutual and much respected friend Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. I would have no objection to the Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk stating that the methods of the Congress are abhorrent to him, if only he had even casually referred to anyone of these obnoxious methods. But how much more abhorrent must be to him the methods of an admirer and so loyal a subject and which instead of elevating certain rebels to the gallows, in sheer perversity elevates them to the bench of the highest courts in the land. Messrs. Talang of Bombay, Chatterji of Lahore, Bannerji of Calcutta and Sir Subramaniya Iyer of Madras were all publicly identified with the Congress, and yet the Government must needs offer a premium to sedition by appointing them to fill the highest judicial positions, from which they cannot be removed except by the authority of the King, and as to that arch-traitor Justice Badruddin Tyabji (no doubt a degenerate Mahommedan) he actually presided at the meeting of a Congress; and soon after wheedled our helpless Government into promoting him to the bench and from there has the hardihood to proclaim in open court that the greatest honour that had been conferred on him was to be appointed President of the Congress. And so utterly lost is the Government to all sense of decency and propriety that it has actually allowed a man to proceed straight from the traitor's camp to the sacred precincts of a court of justice, for the Hon. Mr. Chandravarkar instead of being given six or three months to get rid of his pollution and repent of his misdeed was not allowed more than a day's interval after his return from Lahore to Bombay to enter upon his duties as a Judge of the highest court of the land. How all this must wring the heart of my good old friend to find the Government preferring traitors to the model products of Aligarh who are steeped in loyalty from the soles of their feet to the crown of their head, and who are by no means given to hiding their light under a bushel. There seems to be something funny about the air of Aligarh which prevents the reasoning faculties of an individual, and make him absurdly illogical. In an article in the Pioneer I drew attention to certain facts about the Mahommedans and certain statements made by their leaders. I specified these facts and I mentioned the names of these speakers and quoted their very words. If I was wrong, it was easy enough to say in a few words that the facts stated by me had not occurred, or that the speeches quoted by me had not been made, or were incorrectly reported, or that such speakers did not exist, but instead of doing this, first one gentleman commences by pelting me with volumes of

Mill to prove that as that philosopher had said certain things cannot be, therefore what was stated by me could not have occurred, then another gentleman follows excitedly with the assertion that you are rebels and rascals and deserve to be hanged and a third finishes by appealing for further time till sundry 'articles' and 'lectures' and 'speeches' are ready. I fail to see the logic of all this, and still maintain that till a categorical denial is given to my statements no amount of dust throwing or abuse-flinging will deceive the public. And if I may be allowed to suggest the Nawabs Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Imad-ul-Mulk will save themselves a deal of bother and trouble if they will reply in the columns of the Pioneer to the following questions :

(*a*) Considering that it was an article of faith with the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan that the Mahommedans will never take part in any political agitation, and it is said with much warmth that the policy initiated by him is still religiously followed, how can the Urdu-Nagri demonstrations in different parts of the N. W P. be justified ?

(*b*) If these were not political meetings, having for their object the redress of an alleged grievance, what other name has been patented for them ?

(*c*) Were these meetings attended by Mahommedans of all classes, respectable and otherwise, learned and ignorant, and what was the check put on the speakers, who were of a nondescript class? I was at Allahabad when the protest meeting was held there, and I saw persons going to the open air meeting who could by no stretch of imagination be said to have a knowledged or interest in either Urdu or Nagri, or any verracular in creation.

(*d*) What did the Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk mean in his address at Rampore; published in the Pioneer, when he said, 'I quite admit that in these modern days of enlightenment the people are entitled to criticise the acts of, and have some voice in the management of their own offices ?' Is not this a departure from the policy of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan ?

(*e*) Is not the Nawab Mehdi Hussan Khan, a leading member of the Mahommedan community, and did he not publicly entertain at Lucknow the leading members of the Congress when it had met there twelve months ago ?

(*f*) Did the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk deliver on the 22nd August 1900, at Lucknow, a masterly address of which any man ought to be proud, and in which he elaborately dealt with the advantages to be derived by a better understanding between the Hindus and the Mahommedans, and did he use the following words which were quoted by me in my article in the Pioneer, 'For the Hindus and Mahommedans to prosper without union is impossible, and God willing a time will come when each of the two communities, setting a side their partial difference will work towards the improvement of their country's state ?'

(*g*) Did the Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung at the same meeting and in the presence of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, and without protest from him, use the following words :

'There was growing desire on the part of the Mahommedans to take part

in political agitations, and a time was coming when they would come into the fold of the Congress.'

(*h*) Having regard to the above facts was I wrong in stating in my article in the Pioneer that so far as the Congress was concerned I had found in the Mahommedans 'a change of attitude from one of active resistance in certain quarters, to passive quescence ?'

(*i*) Is the *Moslem Chronicle* an organ of the Mahommedans of Bengal, and has it not stated in its issue of 15th December that the reasons given by me for this change of attitude of the Mahommedans are more or less correct. These are the questions to which I would draw the attention of the Nawabs, who having answered them will find that they need not take any further trouble about 'articles', and 'lectures' and 'speeches'. I am in no way concerned to defend the Congress but I shall here state a fact for the edification of the Nawabs Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Imad-ul-Mulk, which will perhaps take their breath away. I have come across persons who, if not opposed to the Congress, have justified their indifference to it on the ground that it was an organisation started and maintained by the Government for its own purposes, as an outlet for the superfluous energy or discontent of the people, which would otherwise find vent in methods that were open to objection. That this belief is entertained by not a few persons is evident from the fact that the Chairman of the Reception Committee at Lahore thought it his duty to go into this question and controvert this idea. For my part I believe that barring a few very officious officials, the Government not only does not look upon the movement with disfavour, but of late gives it every facility it can, and pays heed to what is said by it, even though, it be to controvert its views. Its leaders are not discredited men, but are looked upon as loyal citizens who in an emergency can be relied upon, and as to the ranks and file the fact of their resorting to open constitutional agitation is taken as a security against their having recourse to practices that are illegal. Can the same be said of the Mahommedans. I am afraid not. No one will deny that they are equally as loyal as Hindus or Christians, but the political education they received is pernicious and demoralising. To swear by all the saints and angels that they will never take part in any political agitation and then on but slight provocation to go holding demonstrations all over the country is conduct not very consistent. The lesson furnished by the Cawnpore riots ought to be taken to heart. Had those engaged in it been taught that for the relief of grievances they ought to resort to legitimate agitation, they might possibly have availed themselves of it instead of taking the law into their own hands. I hope I have said nothing to give offence. Mahommedans to my mind are neither better nor worse than Hindus or Christians. All are equally loyal and well disposed citizens but I should like to see the Mahommedans act in an open, honourable and straight forward manner. It is little too much on their part to claim a monopoly of loyalty, and it is time the farce was finished, especially when capital is made of it to the determinant of other communities,

who having suffered for some time are now thankful to Sir Antony MacDonnel for his just estimate of what is due to each. I wrote my article in the Pioneer, not with the intention of starting a controversy, but to draw attention to the admirable advice given by the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, and to what seemed to me to be a sensible departure on the part of the Mahommedans, and likely to be productive of much good to them. I never said they were going to join the Congress, for apart from the benefit they would derive by doing so, it is immaterial to me whether they joined it, or joined a Congress of dancing dervishes.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 February 1901.

9

LETTER FROM MEHDI HASAN, FATEH NEWAZ JANG TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER

It might perhaps be thought I was entering into the above controversy somewhat late in the day, but I have advisedly preserved silence so as not to interfere in any way with a full and free ventilation of the diverse opinions, which I knew a subject to delicate, was susceptible of. And even now I would have preferred to keep silent, but that my old friend Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk has made repeated appeals to me to let the public know how far Mr. Nundy was correct in quoting me as an advocate of the Mahommedans throwing in their lot with the Congress, and that my silence was misconstrued into an acquiescence of the views expressed by him. Mr. Nundy has, no doubt by reading one or two detached sentences of a speech of mine which was not fully reported, been driven to draw inferences which are not quite warranted, I shall claim your indulgence to be allowed a little space to make my position clear. I may at the outset state that I have not identified myself with the Congress in any way. I still adhere to the views to which I gave expression in the *London Times* and the *St. James's Gazette* some twelve years ago, which are as follows : (1) India is prospering under British rule. (2) It is bad policy on our part to create unnecessary difficulties in the way of Government by stirring up popular agitation, that we must have a certain amount of confidence in the Government on whose shoulders lies the great responsibility of governing a heterogeneous people like the population of India. (3) Any attempt to transplant the political institutions which have grown up in England, to India, where the social institutions (which are in every country the basis of all political institutions) are widely different, is pretty sure to prove a failure.

(4) The leaders of the Congress command the respect as much of the Mahommedans as of the Hindus and whilst their loyalty is undoubted, intellectually they occupy the first ranks in Indian society. But along with this there are certain other opinions I hold which go to constitute my articles of faith as regards political matters. I hold that secret agitation of any kind is injurious both to the rulers and the ruled. The so-called discontent and want of sympathy between the Government and the people, the existence of which is inferred from the criticisms to which officials are subjected, is not due so much to the administrative errors of Government, which is actuated by the best of motives, as to the attitude of exclusiveness, assuming the appearance of pride (a thing most repugnant to the feelings and sentiments of Orientals) of individual members of the ruling class. The question of race estrangement, however trifling it may appear to the nonchalant or satirical, is of the first importance in India. Indeed I am convinced that the future success of British rule in India depends on the successful solution of this problem. No community can prosper if it sits with folded hands trusting the Government to satisfy its needs, but ready to reproach it for not having learnt by inspiration what was likely to promote its welfare. Having regard to these principles which I take as my guide there was nothing inconsistent in my inviting the leaders of the Congress for whom everyone of us has the greatest possible respect to a banquet as stated by Mr. Nundy, nor was there anything inconsistent in my taking part in the Urdu defence agitation. It was to propagate the above principles that in a speech delivered on an occasion when the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was present and when he had advocated the sinking of minor differences between Hindus and Mahommedans and their meeting to promote their common welfare, that I declared that the time had arrived when the members of my community must throw off their lethargy and let the Government in a calm, loyal and dispassionate manner know their wants and grievances, and even take into their consideration whether it was not possible to arrive at an understanding with the members of other communities so far as joint action in political matters was concerned. I have no desire to repudiate anything that was stated by me then, for not only do I feel the necessity of seriously considering how we can maintain our position on the political stage of the English Empire, but I feel assured that a large number of educated and thoughtful Mahommedans cordially agree with my sentiments. The articles contributed by my friend Mr. Nundy to the Pioneer gave rise to a lengthy controversy, but it is a somewhat significant fact that the controversy on behalf of the Mahommedans was carried on by two individuals only, Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk and Mohsin-ul-Mulk. The Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk is an old and honoured friend of mine who by reason of his high position and scholarly attainments deservedly occupies a leading position in our community. Any expression of opinion by him on any matter relating to our community would undoubtedly command respect. In his Presidential address at the Mahommedan Conference at Rampur he briefly stated his views

as regards political agitation in these terms : 'I quite admit that in these modern days of enlightenment the people are entitled to criticise the acts of their Government and have some voice in the management of their own affairs', but when a few days later Mr. Nundy claimed this pronouncement as confirming his views as to the change of attitude amongst the Mahommedans, the Nawab wrote in your columns a letter which was read by a large number of his friends and admirers in his own community with mingled feelings of shame and indignation. It is the aim of the British Government and of all well-disposed persons that the various communities, should cultivate feelings of toleration and harmony towards each other; and this can hardly be realised when the readers of one community take to telling the leaders of another community that they are rebels and traitors and deserve to be hanged without in any way taking the trouble to specify why they deserve this fate. A letter so illogical, uncharitable and abusive carries its own condemnation, but unfortunately it has done or is likely to do us a deal of harm. For whereas it has subjected our community to adverse criticism for holding such irrational and ferocious views, it cannot tend to improve our relations with the Government. From a long and somewhat intimate acquaintance with Englishmen I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing they dislike more than flattery and servility whilst they are prepared to admire honesty and independence though wrong-headed. I am afraid that the Nawab's contributions on this head will not tend to raise our national character in public estimation. His allegation that 'we have made it our business to teach our political creed at Aligarh so that the rising generations should grow up in doctrines which we deem to be sounder and much more patriotic than the doctrines taught by the Congress' is so grandly vague that I am surprised that my good friend the Nawab did not see that he was laying himself open to the charge of indulging in clap-trap. Besides as a Trustee of the Aligarh College I have no hesitation in stating that politics in any shape is a strictly forbidden subject there. The Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's contribution to this controversy is mainly distinguished for his declaration that it was the policy of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan never to engage in political agitation and that this policy is being rigidly carried out at the present time by his successors. I beg to join issue with my friend there. It was not the policy of our late respected leader never to engage in an open discussion of our wants and grievances. The principle he laid down for his guidance was briefly this, in the first place freely and frankly to lay his views on any particular matter before the head of the local government and to try his utmost to bring that official to accept those views and concede to him the desired boon or remove any disability complained of. Failing this I assert with the utmost confidence that no one resorted more readily to public education than did the late Sir Syed Ahmed. And here there are two considerations that we must not lose sight of. There is now no one amongst us who commands the respect and enjoys the confidence of the Government as well as that of our community as did our late leader, with the result that the

rst and I admit our best mode of approaching Government is lost to us. Then again it is an undoubted fact that there has been a change in the manner in which the Congress propaganda was carried on 10 to 12 years ago, much that was objectionable in the speeches and in the reforms advocated having been carefully eliminated. Under these circumstances in the absence of a responsible leader amongst us, I hold that a public discussion of grievances carried out in a temperate and constitutional manner is of necessity forced upon us if we are desirous of preserving ourselves as a nation and not becoming hewers of wood and drawers of water. And if a public agitation for the preservation of our rights has been forced upon us, I take it that the time has arrived when the thoughtful and educated members of our community must take into their serious consideration whether they gain any thing by living in alienation from the other communities who are making rapid strides, not only materially but in the cultivation of those higher and more manly qualities which at any rate remove from them the reproach of obsequiousness and sycophancy. That great scholar Shamsul Oolamah Syed Ali Bilgrami, Public Works Secretary of the Nizam's Government (and a brother of Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk) a few weeks ago openly declared that he 'deprecated strongly the idea of complete isolation from our Hindu brothers in movements involving national progress.' Similarly I, as one interested in the welfare of my community, threw out a hint in the speech referred to by Mr. Nundy whether the time had not arrived to consider how far it was possible to arrange a compromise with the leaders of the National Congress, so that it may be practical for the Mahommedans to take part in it, and I am prepare to stand by my declaration. At the same time I must take exception to the remark of Mr. Nundy imputing ulterior motives to the late Sir Syed Ahmed for his abstention from joining the Congress and to his somewhat sweeping assertion that the Mahommedans, aggrieved at certain acts of Government had decided on throwing in their lot with the National Congress. Whatever they may do in the future it would be unsafe to predict, but this much I will admit that the policy of isolation hitherto adopted is gradually losing its advocates and a change of some kind seems both imminent and desirable.

Source : The Pioneer, 14 April 1901.

10

NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S STATEMENT REGARDING SYED AHMED KHAN'S POLITICAL ATTITUDE

Though Sir Syed Ahmed Khan held the view that the Muslims' greatest need was higher education and they should make all possible effort to acquire

it, yet he was not oblivious of the fact that Muslims as a nation had some special needs which in most respects were different from and in some respects contrary to those of other nations of this country; also the Muslims on account of their inadequate education and unfamiliarity with English literature and English political principles were less capable of protecting their rights and objects, and it is, therefore, necessary to devise some special method for the defence of their rights and national aims. He, therefore, pondered deeply on this question and also consulted such persons, as were competent to express opinion on this delicate problem. Ultimately he proposed on the December 30, 1893 that a Committee be formed for the defence of the political rights of the Muslims.'

Source : Jamiluddin Ahmad (ed.), *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement*.

11

THE TRIBUNE ON MUSLIMS AND POLITICS

So, our educated Islamic brethren are at last coming to see that they cannot eschew politics altogether. We take it as a very good sign that many leading Muslims are seriously thinking of starting a political organisation for the special benefit of their own community. From what we have heard of the movement, it would be just like any other political body in the country. The only peculiarity about it would be its exclusiveness. There are to be non-Hindu members. This tendency towards voluntary isolation is a thing that ought to be carefully noted. In this bold aloofness we find an explanation of so many of our educated Muslim countrymen keeping away from political agitation of any kind whatsoever. It is right and proper that in social, religious, and inter-communal affairs the different sections of the Indian population should work independently of each other. Even in these directions one Indian community would be all the better for help and advice from another. And, as a matter of fact, before the Aligarh leaders had put it into the heads of most of the educated Muslims that it was to their interest to keep apart from the Hindus, mutual sympathy and assistance of this sort was the rule rather than the exception. Even in the field of religion, where, apparently, points of agreement were far fewer than those of difference, earnest and repeated attempts have been made time and again to reduce the latter as far as possible. Muslims of the old liberal school cannot yet understand, how it can be to shut themselves out of the sympathy and regard

of another, when both must live together in close contact with each other for all time. Very faint indeed was the mark that not long ago separated the most cultured Hindus from the most cultured Mussulmans in the Punjab, as far as mutual esteem and good feeling went. However, those days are gone, and let us now concede that it would be for the best if in matters pertaining to religion and social arrangements the two communities had nothing to say to each other. But in the domain of politics not even the most bigoted advocate of separation can bring forward a single good argument in support of the policy of aloofness.

What is happening all over India in respect of Hindu-Mahommedan relations will be evident from the following example. In the town of M-in this Province, the number of Hindus and Mussulmans is almost equally divided but on the whole the balance of power was preserved between two communities. Now and then there were collisions between the extreme sections of the communities but the quarrels were generally the result of personal animosity and nothing to do with religion. The vast majority of Hindus and Mussulmans took the side of a Hindu, and Hindus that of a Mussulman, in a dispute. On occasion of marriage etc. the richer people used to invite as many Hindus and Mussulmans to dinner. A Hindu considered it a point of honour to spend more on the entertainment of Muslims, and vice-versa. Sheikh X on the marriage of this son personally waited on his Hindu guests, leaving his dependents to look after his co-religionists. Visiting the town last year after fifteen years we noted a vast difference in public sentiment in this direction. Mr. Y. Z. Khan, Barrister-at-Law, is now one of the leading residents of the town. And in his peculiar English he is never tired of declaring that 'it was all bosh to work for Union. Hindus and Mussulmans can never (live in) harmony.' Thereby the learned youngman means that he is fully convinced that it is impossible that Hindus and Mussulmans should ever regard each other in any other light than that of rivals. The doctrine, it seems, is very acceptable to the educated young-men of the town, some of whom have been students in the M. A. O. College at Aligarh. The aforesaid Sheikh X's son who is the head of the family (the old gentleman being dead) takes pride in cutting the old Hindu friends of his father. On a recent festive occasion in the family, he ostentatiously omitted to invite Hindus, though he secretly sent sweet-meats, according to the good old custom, to the houses of some Hindu neighbours and fellow-townsmen, as his mother insists on it and compelled (him) to do it... . One or two educated Muslims there are who in their heart of hearts feel sad to observe growing break between the (two) communities; but for the fear of being chaffed by their more zealous co-religionists, they never dare to express their sentiments in public. Now the... Hindus have their own places of amusement and Mussulmans theirs. Exceptions a few old fashioned people who cannot forget the good old times, Hindus keep away from Mussulmans gatherings and fairs, and Mussulmans never go to Hindu melas. In the local

Municipal Committee there is no longer anything like the old concord and good-fellowship; Mussulmans form one party and Hindus another, and it is not rare for them to try to stand in each other's way.

The change that has taken place within less than two decades in the aforementioned town is not confined to that alone. Everywhere the same is the case, unfortunately .... How is it that though obviously there is nothing to prevent educated Hindus and Mussulmans working together for the common purpose of political advancement, the majority of the latter would never consent to join the former .... And now that all intelligent Muslims (are) convinced of the need of some sort of political organisation, having the same objects as the existing one. What is then to prevent their joining the later which are as much for the good of Hindus and Mussulmans ? The only answer to these queries can be found in the determination alluded to in the beginning of the promotions of the welcome movement, viz., the privilege of membership to Muslims only. The new school of Muslims, it seems, cannot bear the thought of working in partnership (with the Hindus) .... Herein lies the difference between the Congresswalas (to give the name which Young India goes by amongst Anglo-Indians) and young Muslims (or which is the same thing, the Aligarh party). The Congress, and all the political associations that are its tributaries or branches are open to all and for the benefit to all who call India their home.

Source : The Tribune, 6 December 1901.

12

LETTER FROM SYED AKBAR ALI TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER ON URDU AND NAGRI

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's pronouncement, in reply to the Nagri Pracharini Sabha at Benares on the vexed Court Character question, which has been agitating the public mind for the last two years, and your editorial note thereon, in a recent issue of the Pioneer, have caused great delight to all true lovers of Urdu literature and cheered the drooping spirits of literary workers. His Honour is perfectly right when he says that 'official Hindi differs from official Urdu merely in the hand-writing employed to denote the same words,' owing no doubt to the dearth of technical terms and equivalent expressions in the Hindi language. In illustration of this, it would be sufficient to cite the following examples taken at random from the patwaris' registers, which have been maintained in Hindi throughout these Provinces

for a quarter of a century.

(*i*) The khasra register is divided into 22 columns, some of which are worded as below :

Col. 1—Number khet *mutabiq khasra bundobust.*

Col. 2—*Rukba ba hisab* bigah *dehi ya kham.*

Col. 6—*Nam malikan.*

Col. 9—*Tariqa-i-abpashi.*

Col. 20—*Sharah* lagan *kashtkar.*

Col. 22—*Kaifiyet.*

(*ii*) The khatauni contains the following entries :

Col. 1—Number *shumar.*

Col. 3—Number Khet *mundarja-i-khasra.*

Col. 4—*Rukha dehi.*

Col. 8—*Muddat-i-kasht.*

(The italics denote purely Persian and Arabic words).

(*iii*) The khata, (*iv*) the Syaha and other registers, in fact all the village papers and even daily reports of the patwaris are written really in the Urdu language, though nominally in Nagri character. His honour is equally right when he declares that, 'There are technical terms derived from Arabic and Persian which have become an integral part of the living speech of both Hindus and Mahommedans. His Honour might have gone a step further and said that, by common consent, both communities have accepted Urdu as the medium of all their legal and commercial transactions and social intercourse and given it the first place in the languages of the country. As a proof of the progress which the Urdu language has made within the last thirty years it may be interesting to note that of the vernacular newspapers published in the Punjab, N. W. P. and Oudh, some 80 per cent are published in Urdu, while those in Hindi barely come up to 10 per cent; and that while some of the Urdu papers such as the *Paise Akhbar* and the *Akhbar-i-Am* claim a circulation of 12,000 and 3,000 copies respectively, with a proportionately large number of Hindu readers, there is not a single Hindi newspaper with even a thousand subscribers ! Again, most of the leading Urdu newspapers such as the *Oudh Akhbar* of Lucknow, the *Nasim* of Agra, the *Anis-i-Hind* of Meerut, the *Rehbar* of Moradabad, the *Victoria* paper of Sialkote, the *Akhbar-i-Am* of Lahore, are not only owned but also very ably conducted by Hindu gentlemen; and many of the literary magazines and even *religious* and social periodicals such as the *Vaish Hitkari*, the *Oudh Review*, the *Arya Bandhu*, the *Arya Samachar*, &c. are also published by our Hindu friends in Urdu. I have come to a personal knowledge of these facts, because I have been publishing a literary and scientific magazine in Urdu and receiving many of the above mentioned newspapers and periodicals in exchange.

It will be impossible, within the limited space of a letter to notice all the grand and important literary contributions by Hindu and Mahommedan writers to the ever-expanding field of Urdu literature. A few however might

be mentioned. The works of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Nazir Ahmed such as the *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, printed lectures and speeches, *Taubut-ul-Nasooh*, *Mirat-ul-Urus*, &c., are too well known to require particular mention; but in later years the grand historical work of Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Zakaullah Khan Bahadur in 13 volumes, entitled the *Tarikh-i-Hindustan* the *Farhang-i-Asafya* and the *Amir-ul-Lughat*, two exhaustive dictionaries of the Urdu language and idiom; Shams-ul-Ulema, Professor Mahomed Husain Azad's *Darbar-i-Akbari* (Court life of Akbar) and *Abi-Hayat*, the latter being a beautiful account of lives of the famous Urdu poets, showing the alterations and improvements that the Urdu language has undergone during different periods; Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Syed Ali's translation of M. Lebon's *Arab Civilisation*; Sufi Amba Pershad's books on spiritualism and mesmerism; Lala Baijnath's *England* and other treatises on social reform; the historical and biographical works of Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Shibli Numani and Serajuddin Ahmed of Amritsar; and last, though not least, the recently published biography of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan by the well-known Maulvi Altaf Husain Hali, written in the most refined and exquisite style, occupying more than a thousand pages, are works which certainly might do honour to the literature of any country.

It will thus be admitted on all hands that the Urdu language has received the imprimatur of approval at the hands of both Hindus and Mahommedans, and, by common consent, become the *lingua franca* of both nations. It is therefore the duty of both to work hand-in-hand, as they have hitherto done, to develop the language of the country and enrich its literature by original works as well as translations from the European language, instead of thwarting each other on merely sentimental grounds. I cannot conclude this letter without adding that His Honour Sir James Digges La Touche has earned the everlasting gratitude of the public of letters and the public at large by his wise and opportune exposition of the views and policy of the Government on a question about which there has not unnaturally been a good deal of misapprehension, and, certainly, some misconception of the real motives of the Government.

Source : The Pioneer, 1 February 1902.

13

THE TRIBUNE ON MAHOMMEDANS AND POLITICAL AGITATION

A good deal has been said and written during the past three months on the subject which heads this article. It was stated in certain newspapers that

Mahommedans had joined the Indian National Congress in large numbers; but the assertion was vehemently denied by certain persons who claimed to speak in the name of the Mahommedan community. The truth was that a little too much was made by some Congress newspapers of the fact that a number of Mahommedans of light and leading had agreed to join the political movement both as delegates and as members of the Reception Committee; whilst the indignant denials proceeded mainly from persons who refuse to believe that any of their co-religionists should question their right to speak, on political matters, in the name of the Mahommedan community. It is impossible to accept the pretentions, of the value they themselves are pleased to put on them. There are men of education and intelligence among our Mahommedan fellow subjects who are in a position to decide what is good for them and what is otherwise; and although they may lack the necessary brass to make themselves heard publicly, we refuse to believe that they will long allow men, who at best represent only themselves, to write and speak in their behalf, particularly when they see that these so-called guides of theirs are leading them into a position which is as false as it is untenable. The number of these men among Mahommedans is on the increase and we think we shall not have to wait long before educated Mahommedans at any rate will discover what should be their methods of working out their political regeneration. It is certain that there is general dissatisfaction in the community with the present condition of affairs. In some parts of India a fairly large section of Mahommedans has been hitherto content to receive their opinions on matters political ready made from Aligarh. But of late there has been a suspicion that in the things and men of Aligarh all that glitters is not gold, and consequently there has been much searching of hearts, which has naturally fluttered the dovecots at Aligarh. A Mahommedan friend of ours very felicitously but correctly characterised the existing situation of affairs as 'the Revolt against Aligarh'. There can be no doubt that Aligarh is no longer to dominate the political opinions of Mahommedans in the different parts of the country. For the Mahommedan community this freedom from a yoke that had become very heavy and almost unbearable will itself be no small gain.

What is political agitation ? Is it necessary and unavoidable ? By Political agitation is meant some organisation or agency by means of which the wishes and wants of the country can be represented or explained to Government, and if necessary the aims and intentions of Government clearly explained to the people. Political agitation is a sort of interpreting agency between the rulers and the ruled in India. As Sir Antony MacDonell observed the other day, 'Political agitation is the natural product of our system of education and of our scheme of Government.' No sane person can assert that the Mahommedans have no wishes or wants, nor will patriotic and intelligent Mahommedans dispute the statement that in most things the Hindu and Mahommedan subjects of the King Emperor are in the same boat. Common grievances, common wishes and wants, and common aims and

aspirations are to serve as the meeting ground for the Hindus and the Mahommedans. We are aware that there are men who are sedulously busy in keeping Mahommedans away from this meeting. These men are personally interested in the success of a *Divide et Impera* policy, and have, unfortunately for India and her people so far had much success in their efforts. But the veil is being lifted a bit from the dark corners of their political propagandism. The day that the rank and file of educated Mahommedans come to see their position clearly, these men are sure to find their occupation gone. There may be differences of opinion as to the methods employed to secure redress against wrong, and to obtain political rights and privileges, but these are matters of detail which can be arranged far easily. The Mahommedans have their wishes and wants; they have grievances, both individual and communal, which need redressing, and they have need of political rights and privileges. Political agitation is, therefore, as much a necessity of civic life for them as its is for Hindus and others in India owning allegiance to His Majesty the King Emperor. It is also equally true that the many common grievances and disabilities of the two communities will require a combination of their forces, not only for the sake of effective action, but also to avoid unnecessary waste of time, energy and money. It is well-known to both Hindus and Mahommedans that their equipment, both mental and material, for the fight for progress, enlightenment and prosperity is very incomplete; and also that, whilst there is a very vast field for steady, sustained and hard work in almost every direction, there are few or no trustworthy and devoted workers. Division of forces can only weaken the organisation. In our opinion the desire to avoid division, which will animate patriotic men both Hindus and Mahommedans, will ultimately lead to a combination of the forces of both the communities. As regards any particular movement such as the Congress, it is well known that it is susceptible of change and improvement. There are many among Hindus who do not approve all that it says and does, and who hold that many changes should be made in it before it can be made an effective agency to work out the political regeneration of the country. The fact, therefore, that Mahommedans do not approve of certain things connected with the Congress, is no argument in favour of their having nothing whatever to do with political agitation.

Let us see now what those who advise Mahommedans to have nothing whatever to do with political agitation suggest. Put briefly, they advocate the retention of the existing line of action if it can be called by any such name. The present policy is to keep quiet, to do anything that will in any way offend or annoy the powers that be, and to be content with the favours that the latter should feel disposed to grant the Mahommedans. This advice can by no stretch of language, be called a 'policy', and the more far seeing and intelligent among our Mahommedan brethren have begun to doubt its wisdom as well as honesty. Conduct dictated by this policy will scarcely be

flattering to the self-respect and dignity of any community. In our opinion those who suggest it for adoption by the Mahommedans cannot have a very high opinion of the intelligence of that community. A few persons—mainly those connected with men who expound this policy on the press and on the platform-doubtless benefit by this arrangement, but the community as a whole is the looser. When appointments go by favour, it is only those Mahommedans who have influence to back them up get them. But there are many Mahommedans qualified by education and character to discharge the duties appertaining to those officers, yet as they have no influence to bring to bear upon the authorities, they have to suffer disappointment. It is well known that among the Mahommedan official in the Punjab, those who got in after under-going a competitive test, are in respect of capacity, morale, and legal attainments very much superior to their brethren who received their appointments by nomination. Nor can it be denied that few of the men who got in by competition could have entered the service, if nomination alone was the method of recruiting it. Again, many more Mahommedans and men of better capacity and character would have got in, had the competition been an open one. To say and imply that the Mahommedans as a race are inferior to the Hindus in calibre and intellectual equipment is to insult the Mahommedans. In all kinds of open competitive examination, whether in India or in England, connected both with the public service and the learned professions, Mahommedans have more than held their own. They have competed successfully in all tests that are open to the King Emperor's Indian subjects. The Indian Civil Service has its Mahommedan members who had little or no difficulty in beating their English and other non-Mahommedan comperes and who are doing their work quite as well as their Hindu and English fellow-servants. In the Indian Medical Service Mahommedans have successfully worked their way through to positions of trust and responsibility, and their chances of success in the open competitive test in the future are quite as favourable as those of the Hindus. Mahommedan gentlemen who have cared to join the profession of law either by passing the English Bar, have had no difficulty in working their way to success and position. In other departments of national activity, trade, industry and the professions, Mahommedans have fully held their own. In University examination—both higher and lower—Mahommedans often take good place and win public exhibitions and scholarships. In the face of all this it is nothing short of an insult to the Mahommedans to tell them that they should oppose political propaganda the object of which is to secure full and fair play for every subject of the King Emperor in the struggle to qualify himself by merit and education for positions of trust and responsibility. In our opinion no better advice can be given to the Mahommedans of India than that given them last week by Sir Antony MacDonnell when a deputation from the Aligarh M. A. O. College waited upon him. He said : 'You are, indeed, correct in thinking that the Government has your interests at heart, but nevertheless

the Government has many things and many claimants to think of. God helps those who help themselves, and your interests are best promoted by self-reliance and by equipping yourselves with the arms which modern education supplies; do not let yourselves be diverted from this latter object by the bugbear of religious heterodoxy, or by the appeals of Nadvats to antique formulas. National regeneration is not worked out in that way, and the battles of modern life must be fought with modern weapons. But whilst you should press forward and assert your claims, there is no reason that you should regard your Hindu competitor as a foe.' These words of valuable advice deserve to be written in letters of gold and accepted for guidance by every Mahommedan individual, organisation and institution working for the political and educational improvement of their community.

Source : The Tribune, 26 November 1901.

14

LETTER FROM PANDIT MANOHAR NATH SAPRU TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER ON URDU AND NAGRI

In your issue of yesterday Syed Akbar Ali, while expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the present Lieutenant-Governor, has done much injustice to the late ruler of these Provinces. Any fair minded person would see that there was no question of language then, as there is no question of language now. The position taken up by Sir James La Touche is literally the same as Sir Antony's. The language of the people and Court, whether you call it Urdu or Hindustani, is the same. The preponderance of Arabic and Persian words makes it Urdu, the use of Sanskrit words makes it Hindi. But the question is whether it can be proved by your correspondent that Urdu characters are more extensively used by the masses than Hindi characters. Merely stating that eighty per cent of the newspapers are published in Urdu, or even quoting their names, would not do Of all the papers mentioned by Mr. Akbar, their total circulation does not come up even to that of the *Bharat Jiwan* of Benares, or the *Saraswati* of Allahabad. As to the *Anis Hind*, how is it possible for the gentlemen to receive it in exchange, when it has ceased to exist ? The number of Urdu papers may be numerous, but their circulation is miserably poor and bears no comparison to the Hindi papers. Mr. Akbar says that 'There is not a single newspaper with even a thousand subscribers.' This is absolutely incorrect, as the circulation of even the latest born, the *Oudh Samachar* has reached that figure. There is yet another reason for the

paucity of the Hindi papers in the United Provinces. It is due to the very large circulation of the *Venkateshwar* of Bombay, and *Bharat Mitra* and *Bangobasi* of Calcutta, which are subscribed for by thousands. Of all the Urdu papers in these Provinces, the *Hindustani* has the largest circulation and is the cheapest and admittedly the best, yet its circulation does not exceed 1,000 copies.

Now to come to the literature test. The publication of one Hindi work, the *Ramayana* of Tulsi Das, is sufficient to open the eyes of the Urduites as to the immense popularity of Hindi. If Mr. Akbar will only condescend to make enquiries from the Newal Kishore Press, the largest vernacular press in these Provinces, and the Venkateshwar Press of Bombay, he can easily find out for himself the number of Hindi books sold annually in these Provinces, but he will never do it.

Source : The Pioneer, 6 February 1902.

15

LETTER FROM POORNA TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER REGARDING NAGRI AND URDU

The following sentence in Syed Akbar Ali's letter, printed in the Pioneer of the 1st instant, deserves to be written in letters of gold : 'It is therefore the duty of both (Hindus and Mahommedans) to work hand in hand, as they have hitherto done, to develope the language of the country and enrich its literature by original works as well as translations from the European language instead of thwarting each other on merely sentimental grounds.' The learned Syed's allegations, however, which precede the above remark cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. He alleges that 'by common consent both communities have accepted Urdu as the medium of all their legal and commercial transactions and social intercourse and given it the first place in the languages of the country.' This assertion will not bear a moment's scrutiny. In fact to those who know how promptly and strenuously in the early days of British rule Hindus tried (with ultimate success) in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, the Central Provinces and elsewhere, for the substitution of their own languages (Bengali, Marathi, &c., as the case may be) for Persian the assertion must sound astounding and ridiculous. Persian was acquired by literate communities in pre-British times primarily on account of its having been the State language and only secondarily out of linguistic tastes. Even Hindustan proper, where Persian and Urdu were more in vogue than in any

other part of India, there are records of very early attempts having been made to have Hindi officially recognised.

The learned Syed seems to think that a proof of his assertion lies in the fact that in the Khasra registers the terms '*rukba, abpashi, kashtkar,* &c.' (purely Arabic or Persian words) occur 'owing to the dearth of the technical terms and equivalent expressions in the Hindi language.' I must remind him that importation of official terms in a language is no proof either of that language being a nondescript or of dearth of terms and expressions in it. In Marathi words like *arzldawa, faryadi, gunah, khauj, ijlas, sahab bahadur,* are constantly used in court documents, but who dare assert that for that reason Marathi-speaking people consented to make Urdu their language ? In Bengali legal terms like *lakhiraj,* which are not generally even correctly pronounced by Bengali gentlemen, are often met with ; but surely that is no indication of the Bengali's fondness for *Urdu-e-mualla.*

Put legal and official expressions aside, and see what a profound debt of gratitude Urdu owes to Sanskrit and Hindi for its growth and development. *Singar, Joban, birog tan, man, kam, basant, sardi, barsat, git, lahar, nadi, samudra, sir, badan, mat,* and other words too numerous to mention, are not only not shunned but eagerly used by the best Urdu writers in their prose and poetry, and, if I were allowed to refer to corruptions, I would assert, without hesitation, that it would be an impossible affair for Syed Akbar Ali to speak Urdu without using corrupt forms of Sanskrit and Hindi nouns and verbs. There are indeed some branches of literature in which Urdu cannot do without Sanskrit and Hindi at all. Take music, for instance, the names *bhairawi, des, bihag, sarang, gauri* &c. are all Sanskrit, and they must occur in the works of all Urdu dramatists and novelists who care to introduce music in to them. The learned Syed also relies on the fact that there are good Urdu works of which the authors are Hindus. This is a true and, I add, soothing fact, but equally soothing is the fact that some of the best Hindi authors have been Mahommedans, for instance, Khane Khanan (of Emperor Akbar's court) Ras Khan, Mubarak, Abdurrahim, Muhammad Arif (of Bilgram), Syed Ali Bilgrami.

I say once for all that I cannot praise a Hindu who out of prejudice shuns the study of Urdu nor a Mahommedan who for the same reason hates Hindi. Europeans learn more than one language. Why may not natives of India master both Sanskrit and Persian, or at least Hindi and Urdu ? Hindus and Mahommedans have been associated together for centuries, and it would obviously strengthen their feelings of union if they would respect and master each other language. Syed Akbar Ali seems to be labouring under the idea that the Hindi literature is a poor one, but it is a mistake to suppose so, for in Hindi, too, there are (to use the Syed's words) 'works which cartainly might do honour to the literature of any country'. As a matter of fact there are works in Hindi like of which one would vainly seek in Urdu. As regards 'dearth' of expressions, it is high time to divest the learned Syed of this idea

on the point. For *raqba* we have in Hindi *Kshetraphal*, *gram* or *gam* for *deh*, *Krishi* for *kasht*, *sankhya* for *shumar*, and so forth, but no advocate of Hindi can have any desire to do away with terms which by usage have become to all concerned as familiar as the English words *rail*, *station*, *police*, *decree*, *dismiss*, *court*, *appeal*, *late*, &c.

This letter is growing long and I bring it to a close abruptly and reluctantly. I have to add, however, that in His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's reply to the address of the Nagri Pracharini Sabha of Benares there was absolutely nothing discouraging to the cause of Hindi as a language. On the other hand it was sympathetic and hope-inspiring all through, and it would have been graceful for the learned Syed to refrain from leading the readers of the *Pioneer* to believe that his assertion that Urdu has become the '*lingua franca* of both nations' derives support from any of His Honour's utterances. His Honour has certainly 'earned the everlasting gratitude of the republic of letters and the public at large' simpley because as a wise statesman he is inclined to patronise Hindi as well as Urdu, and not (as the Syed seems to think) because His Honour said that Urdu was the sole language of both the nations, for he said nothing of the kind.

Source : The Pioneer, 9 February 1902.

16

LETTER FROM SYED AKBER ALI TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER REGARDING URDU AND NAGRI

I must thank your correspondents, Messrs Sapru and Poorna, whose letters appeared in the *Pioneer* of the 6th and 8th ultimo respectively, for considering my humble advice to Hindu and Mahommedans worthy of being 'written in letters of gold,' and for admitting that 'the language of the people and Court, whether you call it Urdu or Hindustani, is the same; 'and I sincerely hope that they and their friends will also act up to it and suit the action to the world, for, as remarked by Lord Curzon in his recent Convocation address, 'There is nothing more damaging to national reputation than a marked discrepancy between words and acts.' If these gentlemen really mean what they say and are satisfied with the very reasonable concession already granted by the Government, *viz.* the issue of summonses and processes in Nagri as well as Persian characters, and the presentation of petitions and complaints in Persian or Nagri cnaracters at the option of the parties but written in the language of the Court, *i. e.*, if these gentlemen disclaim all

intention of seeking the displacement of the Urdu language by Hindi, they will render an immense service to the country by asking their Congress leaders to pass a resolution to that effect, as then there will be an end to all acrimonious controversy and bad feeling, and no need for the existence of the Nagri Pracharini Sabha or of the Urdu Defence Association.

I am, however, at a loss to reconcile Mr. Sapru's statement with facts and to understand how he could have had the courage of declaring in the columns of the *Pioneer* that 'there is no question of language now,' in the teeth of the address of the Nagri Pracharini Sabha which winds up thus : 'We therefore pray that Your Honour would be graciously pleased to accord your sympathy and countenance to this Association by recognising and supporting the claims of the Hindi language and Nagri character in connection with... the administration of justice in the United Provinces.' (Vide full text of the address printed in the *Pioneer* of the 9th January, 1902, page 4). To this preposterous request His Honour most fittingly replied in these words : 'But when you ask me to support the claims of the Hindi language in connection with the administration of justice in the United Provinces, it would seem that your aspirations go beyond what a Government can do and beyond what I am prepared to attempt.' (Vide His Honour's speech in the *Pioneer* of the 10th idem, page 5). I leave it to your readers to judge from the above whether the action of the Sabha did not involve the 'question of language', and whether Mr. Sapru did not attempt to swallow a live fly as the Urdu saying goes.

Messrs Sapru and Poorna betray amazing ignorance of the rudiments of structure of Urdu language when the former says that the preponderance of Arabic and Persian words makes it Urdu, the use of Sanskrit words make it Hindi, and the latter, with self satisfaction, declares 'what a profound debt of gratitude Urdu owes to Sanskrit and Hindi for its growth and development.' These gentlemen ought to have known, as the man in the street does know, that Urdu is a mixed language of the camp made up chiefly of Hindi or Brij Bhasha, and partly of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit words, and that its ever-expanding vocabulary has received and is receiving fresh additions from English, the language of the rulers. Moreover the tendency of modern or refined Urdu, like pure English, is towards a simple, natural style avoiding all bombast or pedantry as perusal of any of the works enumerated in my last letter will show.

Urdu is thus the mixed language or *lingua franca* of both Hindus and Mahommedans; it sprang up at Indraprust (Delhi), it has grown up and developed under the fostering care and combined influence of both communities, and has reached the zenith of perfection under the auspices of the British Government. It is a mistake to suppose that it was imported by, or is the sole and exclusive property of the Mahommedans. It is a language which not only Hindu gentlemen but also ladies speak and write as fluently as the Mahommedans. Any one who has read the fine autobiography of Srimati Hardevi, the accomplished Kayesth lady of Allahabad, or the article on Hindu

social life by the pen of Rani Surat Kuar, Taluqdar of Kherigurh, in the pages of the *Oudh Review*, a first class monthly Urdu Magazine conducted by Munshi Ramji Das Bhargava of Lucknow and Munshi Jalva Pershad, editor of the *Oudh Akhbar*, cannot but admire the elegant style and natural command of words possessed by these ladies. Space prevents my quoting some beautiful passages from their articles which I reserve for future occasion. Urdu is, in fact, the living language of the country to which His Honour, in addressing the students of the Allahabad European High Schools on 19th December last, alluded in these terms : 'It was extremely important for every European who lived in India to have a sound knowledge of the language of the country. He was glad to see that prizes had been given to pupils who could read Urdu. They who lived in what he might call Hindustan, had the special advantage that the language spoken locally Hindustani, was more widely known and useful than that of any other part of the country, and in Madras or Bombay or in any other part they would find that language useful.' (Vide *Pioneer* of 21st December 1901.) As a matter of fact any Urdu speaking native or foreigner can make himself perfectly understood to the Pushtu-speaking Afridi of Peshawar; the Gujerati-speaking Parsis, Bhatias, Khojas and Memons of Bombay, the Tamil and Telugu-speaking Iyers and Moodliars of Madras and to the Bengali Babu of Calcutta; and can do his shopping with equal ease and facility in the Chandni Chowk of Delhi, the Kinari Bazar of Agra, the Chowks of Lucknow, Cawnpore and Allahabad, the Dalmandi of Benares, the Chandni Bazar and Municipal Market of Calcutta, the Bhandi Bazar and Crawford Market of Bombay, the Char Minar of Hyderabad and the Black Town of Madras.

Speaking of the comparative circulation of the Urdu and Hindi papers, Mr. Sapru tries to throw dust in the eyes of the public when he makes a sweeping statement, unsupported by statistics, that the 'total circulation' of all the papers mentioned by me does not come up even to that of the *Bharat Jivan* of Benares, or the *Saraswati* of Allahabad.' Now, according to the Administration Report of these Provinces for the year 1898, the circulation of *Bharat Jivan* is 1,500 only-the *Saraswati* is not mentioned-while that of the *Paisa Akhbar*, which is the only vernacular paper enjoying the privilege of a special post office and is far ahead of all the local Hindi papers put together, is more than 12,000. I am not aware of the circulation of the *Bangabasi* or *Bharat Mitra* of Calcutta or the *Venkateshwar* of Bombay; but this much I know that none of these papers, or for the matter of that any other vernacular paper published in any part of India, enjoys, like the *Paisa Akhbar*, the privilege of a special post office. In assigning the wide circulation of the Bengal and Bombay papers as the 'reason for the paucity of the Hindi papers in the United Provinces, 'your correspondent has perhaps, unwittingly injured the cause of Hindi, as he thereby indirectly admits that the number of the Hindi reading population which its advocates put down at several millions in their memorials to Government is not sufficiently large or really strong to

support a single well-conducted local journal. It also hardly redounds to their credit that their wants should be met by papers published outside the province in which they live, more and have their being, and clearly proves that the demands falls much short of the supply.

A word about the literature test and I have done. As advised by my friend Mr. Sapru I have made enquiries at the Newal Kishore Press, the largest Vernacular Press in India, and got a copy of the latest catalogue of books published and sold at that Press. I beg to give the following analysis of its contents, which I trust will not prove unintersting to your readers. The catalogue proper consists of 99 pages of which the first five contain a list of Urdu law books and only half a page of Acts in 'Deva Nagri character'; the next 22 pages (6 to 28) are devoted to Arabic and Persian works in every department of literature, while 35 pages (29 to 64) contain a closely printed list of Urdu books, the last three pages enumerating Urdu translations of Hindi religious works. Of the remaining 35 pages 30 contain a list of Hindi and five of Sanskrit works. To sum up, of the total 99 pages of the catalogue the first 64 or two-thirds are devoted to Arabic, Persian and Urdu works, while the Hindi and Sanskrit books occupy only 35 pages of one-third part of the catalogue. These facts must make your correspondent sorry for referring me to the Newal Kishore Press and I hope he will think twice before referring me or any one else to any other vernacular press in future. Before taking leave of your valued correspondents, it would not be out of place for me to state that I have tried, as far as possible, to confine my remarks to facts and figures, and refrained from making reckless or sweeping statements such as those indulged in by them; should, they still refuse to admit their error and act upon my advice, and persist in calling black white and night day : there is no help for it, as, in the words of the poet.

Gar nabinud be roz shappar chashm,
Chashma-i Aftab ra chi gunah.

If the bat's eye cannot see during the day, What is the fault of the sun's disc ?[1]

Source : The Pioneer, 8 March 1902.

17

THE PIONEER ON 'A MUSSULMAN CONGRESS'

A meeting of the Saharanpur Mussulmans was recently held in a native theatre to hear Nawab Mushtaq Husain Viqar-ul-Mulk, late of Hyderabad

on the question of a political association to safe-guard the interests of his co-religionist. About 400 men were present. Maulvi Nazir Husain, a retired pleader and an Arabic scholar, was voted to the chair. The proceedings 'not having commenced long after the appointed hour, the Nawab was called away from the meeting by reason of a previous engagement with the Commissioner then on an official visit here. Both he and the Collector were informed of the objects of the meeting. Maulvi Abdulla Jan addressed the meeting at length, saying that the time had arrived for Indian Mussulmans to agitate for their rights and to form into, a recognised and respectable body to defend themselves against the encroachments of other communities ; that when the Indian National Congress was started in 1885 the Mussalmans were indifferent, as their revered leader the late Sir Syed Ahmed was opposed to their joining the Congress on the ground that it was too strong a dose for the feeble Mussalman constitution. They now found that it was necessary to beg unitedly for political concessions from Government for the preservation of community, that this they could do humbly and loyally, and without hostility to other communities. The two principal points on which the proposed Mussulman Congress would differ from the Indian National Congress were the demand for representative.Government and for public appointments by open competition, as being injurious to Mahommedans. What they wanted was a certain number of seats in the Legislative Councils and Municipal Boards, and of public appointments reserved, not in proportion to their numerical strength, but in proportion to their education and position, within particular territorial areas. The Chairman then summed up in a lucid and logical speech, and delegates were chosen.

Source : The Pioneer, 31 July 1903.

18

LETTER FROM MUSHTAQ HUSAIN VIKAR-UL-MULK TO THE EDITOR, PIONEER REGARDING 'THE MAHOMMEDAN POLITICAL ASSOCIATION'

I have read in the Pioneer of the 31st July last the telegraphic communication purporting to give a summary of the proceedings of a meeting held at Saharanpur in connection with a proposed Mahommedan Political Association. While giving a fairly correct account of the proceedings your correspondent has reported them in a manner which renders the aims and objects of the Association liable to be misunderstood. Now to call the movement 'a Mussul-

man Congress' as your correspondent has done, is apt to give it a character different to what it is intended to have. I have no objection to the word Congress being applied to this Association, if your correspondent or any one else chooses to do so ; but I do object to the implied suggestion which tends to establish a correspondence between our movement and the Indian National Congress. The two movements are essentially different not only in their most important objects, but also in their *modus operandi*. Public agitation, ch as has a tendency to lead the public to mistrust the Government, is the distinctive feature of the National Congress ; whereas our programme expressly avoids public agitation and accepts as an axiom a complete confidence in the Government. We start with the firm conviction and seek to implant it in the mind of every Indian Mussulman, that our national destiny is now bound up with the presence and permanence of British rule in this country, and that in the Government of the day we have got our best and surest friend. But the Government is confronted with such difficult and complex problems, and it has to deal with such various and conflicting interests, that it does require help on the part of the governed in the shape of true representation of facts and free expression of their wants. We, the Indian Mussulmans, being in the minority, have our own especial needs and require some means through which we can place them before the Government. Sir Syed performed the important function on behalf of our community. In all the matters connected with the Government he had come to be regarded by a sort of tacit consent as the representative of the whole community, and the Government always recognised him as such. He always voiced their wants and sentiments with complete freedom, and his representations always received due considerations at the hands of the Government. But in later years even Sir Syed felt the need of an organised body for the purpose of representing our interests to the Government. In 1893 he started the Defence Association with the object of defending Mussulman interests as opposed to the other conflicting interests to the country. Upon Sir Syed's death his place as leader and representative of the community in matters political remained unfilled and is so to the present day; and the result was that when the time came, soon after his death, for a proper representation of our views and sentiments with regard to the Urdu and Hindi question, there was confusion and chaos. The Government professed to recognise certain gentlemen as representatives whom the community regarded as mere *jo-huzoors*, and the men who professed to represent the views of the community were branded by the Government as mere up starts and nobodys. There was no one individual or body of individuals entitled to be regarded as the representative of the community, and this pitiable situation suggested the idea of reviving the old organisation which Sir Syed had initiated, with certain modifications required by the changed circumstances and conditions of our time. Such ideas had been agitating the minds of the thinking portion of the community for a long time till they assumed a practical shape in the proposal of this Political Association, which held its first meeting at Lucknow in

November, 1901. The aims and objects of this Association are clearly laid down in the following chief resolutions which were passed at the first meeting : (*a*) This meeting is of opinion that one of the aims of this Association should be to impress the Mahommedans of India with the conviction that their well-being and prosperity depended entirely on the stability and permanence of British rule in India. (*b*) This meeting is of opinion that one of the objects of this Association should be to lay the grievances of Mahommedan community before the Government in a moderate and respectful tone and to try to save the Mahommedan public from forming a wrong opinion of any acts of the Government. (*c*) This meeting is of opinion that keeping in view the aforesaid objects the organisation should refrain from assuming a hostile attitude towards other communities. (*d*) This meeting is of opinion that as the two main principles of the Indian National Congress, viz-1. The demand for a representative Government and 2. The appointment of candidates for Government service on passing the competitive examination, are obviously injurious to the Mahommedans &c-&c. It is absolutely necessary for the Mahommedans to keep themselves aloof from the Indian National Congress.

A more persual of these resolutions will show that public agitation for the purpose of securing political concessions was never the object of this movement, nor has it ever been resorted to at any of the meeting that have been held in this connection. We believe that at the present stage of our progress, of all the political needs, the greatest is to teach the people to have complete confidence and trust in the Government and in its benigh intentions; and we further believe that to constitute ourselves into a sort of Opposition and to criticise every action of the Government is not conducive to the attainment of this end ; and therefore we disapprove of public agitation as a means of securing our political objects. In our opinion the best way to represent our needs and requirements is to approach the Government directly, putting our case with respect and moderation. This is what our Association proposes to do. I hope I have made our position clear ; and as the report published in your paper seems to convey something different and puts a different complexion upon the character of our movement, I thought it necessary to address you these lines in the hope that you would give them some space in your paper.

Source : The Pioneer, 16 August 1903.

19

THE MAHOMMEDANS SHOULD HAVE A POLITICAL ORGANISATION

It appears to be the common fate on movements initiated by Mahommedans that they create more noise than is either necessary or warrantable. It is unnecessary to say with whom the responsibility lies for it is well know that a considerable section of our community delights in beating the big drum. Be that as it may, we trust that where such inclination exists it will be suppressed, for what is necessary is the cultivation of business habits. A little more work, and a little less noise,—that would suit us admirably at the present juncture where we are badly in need of earnest men who would be content to work quietly, and would aim at achieving results rather than making a name.

In the general dearth of men of the requisite type it is a pleasure to us to note that in Mr. Mushtaq Hussain Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk Bahadur—at all events, we have a quiet worker. In him we find many of those qualities which are necessary for carrying a project to a successful conclusion. To untiring energy is added strength of purpose and a disinterestedness and courage which is simply above cavil. Once he has embarked on a course he has embarked on it for good. There is no turning back. There may be a pause; indeed there was a pause in a certain specific case with which we are now concerned.

It is well-known that he was the prime mover of the meeting which was held at Lucknow on 21st October 1901, with the object of initiating an organisation for meeting and representing the political wants of the Mahommedans of India. 'Mahommedans of India' is rather a high sounding phrase; nevertheless, this is what the intention was : to establish an organisation for the benefit of the Mahommedans of India. Whatever it is feasible to establish an organisation which would be justified in claiming that it represented the Mahommedans of India, is a question which need not be raised just at present. Let us first see what the meeting actually was like, what it did, and what it resolved on doing later on, in pursuance of its objects.

The printed record of the proceedings shows that the meeting was a consultation meeting. It further shows that it was attended by twenty-six members. It may suit a poet to say 'What is in a name' so as to imply that there is nothing in it. It does not suit us. In prosaic affairs of this world, specially when a representative character is claimed, names are of the utmost importance. The list of gentlemen present is not long. It would, however, be more to the purpose to give a short analysis of it :

Barristers, ten, two from Patna, one from Aligarh the rest from Lucknow itself.

B.A., LL. B's (excluding Barristers) six; Paniput, Manpuri, Aligarh, Fyzabad and Lucknow; these are the places of residence noted against their

names.

Four gentlemen designated as Raises. Three of these are known to the writer personally. They are young gentlemen—and men of substance—from Machhlishahr, Aligarh and Lucknow.

The Editor, Paisa Akhbar, Lahore.

Three gentlemen, designated as pleaders, from Shahjahanpur, Moradabad and Fyzabad respectively.

Two influential gentlemen representing the learning and enlightenment of an older generation-Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk himself and M. Mashi-uz-zaman Khan-a former tutor of H.H. the Nizam.

These were the gentlemen present, and it is for the readers to judge whether all things considered it was or was not as influential a consultation meeting as it is feasible or Mahommedans to hold in these parts.

We shall now give a summary of the proceedings.

The first two resolutions define the objects of the organisation of which the necessity is said to be obvious. We note that social reform is tacked on to politics, but this is now generally admitted to be a mistake. It is proposed to eliminate reform, formally, later on, especially as it has since been undertaken by a section of the General Educational Conference. The organisation will, then, be merely a vehicle for representing the wants of Mahommedans and for defending their rights whenever necessary.

Resolution III, makes it incumbent on the organisation, to impress upon Mahommedans that their interests are bound up indissolubly with the security of the British Government.

Resolution IV, lays down that the Association will (intemperate and respectful terms) represent the wants of the Mahommedans to the Government, and it will, at the same time, explain to the masses, whenever necessary, the real object of Government orders and, thus, try to prevent, or remove, any misapprehension which may arise on the part of Mahommedans.

Resolution V, emphasises the advisability of refraining from giving offence to other communities so far as possible.

Resolution VI, is important. It lays down that it is essential that Mahommedans should refrain from supporting the National Congress.

This resolution was proposed by Mr. Syed Ali Imam, Barrister-at-law Patna, Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, Barrister-at-Law, Lucknow, and M. Ahtsham Ali of the same city objected, apparently, to the wording of the resolution. With this exception, this resolution, like the formar resolutions, was carried *nem con.*

Resolution VII, is the last resolution passed. It has been termed an omnibus resolution. It lays down that the resolutions passed in the meeting are tentative. It authorises Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk and two other members to take practical steps for holding a representative meeting at a subsequent date at Lucknow. It lays down that meetings be held in each district for the election of representatives for the larger meeting. It also provides for a central

Committee, a small cabinet and for provincial Committees with branches in each district. It lays down that the representatives should be educated Mahommedans with an income of at least Rs. 500 per annum.

The pause to which we referred at the outset has occurred in the carrying out of an important section of the omnibus resolution; but for the last two months Nawab Vikar-ul-Mulk has been on the move, visiting district head-quarters and important towns in parts of these Provinces, and procuring the election of representatives for the general meeting after explaining his object both in private and in public. He has, we believe, done with Rohilkhund. Last week he visited Aligarh and Khurja, in the Bulandshahar district. His efforts here, which were fully seconded by some local gentlemen, resulted in a public meeting in the Town-Hall, on Sunday last, and in 'the election of representatives'—ten for Aligarh, and five for Bulandshahar—fifteen in all. It is expected of the 'representatives' here and elsewhere that they will hold themselves in readiness for the meeting which will be held, probably, during the autumn, at Lucknow; and will there take part in the initiation of an organisation for representing the views and wishes of 'Mahommedans of India' on public questions which may arise from time to time.

It will be seen that the meeting, which will settle whatever is to be settled will be held at a future date at Lucknow, and what is now being done is preliminary to those proceedings.

While it would be premature and, possibly, even unfair, to express a decided opinion on some matters of detail, it is, we think, permissible, and even necessary, that we should discuss certain issues which have been raised already. Thus, we should consider whether it is at all necessary that Mahommedans should have an organisation for political purposes. Is such an organisation wanted ? Is it, again, in consonance with the present 'policy' of Mahommedans—a 'policy' laid down by Sir Syed, and very generally, if not universally, accepted by Mahommedans ? The answer to these questions will probably be in the affirmative, but there are some other questions which cannot be answered with equal confidence. Is it feasible or warrantable to make it an All India Organisation ? If so, what evidence is there to show that the two presidencies—Madras and Bombay-Sindh, Central Provinces, and Berar are even remotely and partially in touch with the organisation ?

The responsibility for suggesting this somewhat inconvenient question rests with the movers themselves. They are not only seeking to voice the sentiments of the Mahommedans of India, but have also allied themselves with the representative principle. There is not the slightest objection to their introducing this element. One can go further and say that the principle of representation being in the ascendant, it is advisable that Mahommedans should learn to act on it. It should, however, be remembered that there are certain tests which are applicable and which, as a matter of fact, are applied by the press and critics generally to such institutions as claim a representative character. Are the movers prepared for those tests ? The introduction of this

principle with due formality is a new move for Mahommedans, but it is not becuase it is new that any one can reasonably take exception to it. What the present writer would, however, wish to point out is that it is a somewhat risky proceeding to lean against it for support. Occasions will arise when the claim of the organisation in this respect will be subjected to close scrutiny. It may then be found that there is a structural weakness in the organisation, that what was believed to be a source of strength has proved itself to be the weakest point in the scheme.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. We might modify the scope of the proposed organisation so as to include certain provinces only, or else, we might sent agents to the remoter provinces with a view to enlisting the support of influential Mahommedans in those parts. In the writers' opinion it will never do to present the two presidencies, for example, with a cut and dry scheme and say to them 'Brethren this is for you. Try it and you will find that it suits you admirably.' Apart from the impropriety of the thing, you cannot act in this way and still claim to represent the Mahommedans of India.

There is another word of caution which might be added. There is nothing to show that the telegram which appeared in the *Poineer* of 31st July under the somewhat sensational heading 'A Mahommedan Congress' emanated from a Mahommedan source. But all the same it is in the nature of a 'big drum'. When the writer next takes up the subject he will attempt to show that the present movement, however harmless and unpretentious in reality, is liable to be misunderstood in essential respects and performances of this kind can only result in accentuating the same.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, August 1903.

20

MAHOMMEDAN POLITICAL ORGANISATION

It will be remembered that in the course of his speech in the Viceregal Council in connection with the last budget, the Hon'ble Babu Sri Ram appealed to the Viceroy to banish famine from the land. The importance and the gravity of the subject are beyond question. Nevertheless, the least one can say is that the Hon'ble member's appeal was not received by the press-specially the Anglo-Indian Press-with attention or respect.

However disagreeable it may be this attitude of the press was not unjustifiable. The explanation of it is to be found in the fact that the Hon'ble member did not deal with the matter in the best possible style. There was

no occasion for a personal appeal. It is a matter which concerns the Government of India. Moreover famines cannot be, and as a matter of fact, has been appreciably reduced by means of administrative measures. It would probably be unfair to suppose that the Hon'ble Babu Sri Ram did not know what is so obvious to this and to other writers. But in this case it is all the more regretable that he employed the terms he did in dealing with the subject.

It is a matter of common knowledge that Anglo-Indian public opinion is touchy on the point. It has some justification for complaining that the Government is frequently saddled with responsibility in this connection, as if it is the Government which has introduced proverty and hunger into the country. This indeed, appears to be the firm belief of many of our countrymen. Thus, for example, Mr. G. Subramani Iyer, writing in the July number of the East and West says of the 'National Policy' of England in respect of India that it 'has produced evils of colossal dimensions, unique in the history of any foreign rule, because it has reduced a whole nation, once prosperous and happy, to a condition of chronic starvation and of unrelieved despair'. When educated Indians make statements to that effect they, of course, do so with reference to the fiscal policy of the Government, but the ignorant masses cannot understand the matter from that point of view. This is exactly where lies the inadvisability of representing the Government as if it were no better than a Kali—a veritable Goddess of devastation.

The writer is not aware that the beneficence of Government in connection with famine measures is, as a matter of fact, misunderstood by the ignorant masses. At the same time the danger of such a misapprehension is so eminent in times of plenty that the educated Indian would do well to keep it in sight whenever he opens his mouth or uses his pen. What we should do is to recognise on every suitable occasion that famines have always been and will, probably be frequent, but the country was never more prepared for combating the visitations than it is at the present day. While admitting that such is the case we should press on the attention of the Government any suitable administrative measures which may suggest themselves to us.

To many of our readers the foregoing remarks will, no doubt, appear to be mere platitudes and consequently unnecessary. But one can show from the speeches and writings of certain eminent men that the attitude which has been here recommendation does not commend itself to them. They have deliberately adopted a different attitude. They have repeatedly made themselve responsible for statements which are calculated to create irritation and despair. According to these authorities famines were never more frequent or more devastating than they have been under the British Government. And how can it be otherwise when the British Government's is 'practically one of the most extortionate and oppressive that ever existed in India'.

When a man like Mr. Dada Bhai Naroji makes himself responsible for such statements the necessity of an appeal for moderation and sobriety of

judgment must be obvious, even imperative. It is all the more necessary to enjoin caution, as question relating to famines and agricultural subjects generally are not academic matters, or questions of high politics in which the people at large have no real interest. Happily, there is good reason for believing that the agricultural classes, which constitute the majority of the people of India, do not share the opinion attributed to the ex-members of Parliament, but once such ideas get into their heads it would be exceedingly difficult to dislodge them. The soil is not uncongenial. All that is necessary is the scattering of seeds. If that operation is sedulously carried on a plentiful harvest of dissatisfaction may be predicted with some certainty.

There is not the slightest desire on the writer's part to make it a question of Congress and anti-Congress politics. He equally disclaims any desire to make invidious distinctions between the Hindus and Mahommedans. It would be a perversion of truth to deny that both Hindus and Mahommedans are equally liable to get inoculated with crude ideas, for in this matter there is little to choose between the masses of the two communities.

Apart from the fact that the system of Government is, in the main, unintelligible to both communities alike, there is the undeniable fact that they fully share each other's belief that the days which are gone by were better than our own times. They fully believe that there is such a thing as *burkut*, and they, moreover, believe that with the introduction of peace and order, dear old *burkut* spread its wings and flew away. To pursuade them that *burkut*-as they understand it-is a figment of the imagination is not easy. In their minds the idea ranks with religious belie's which as the readers know, are not always based on the revealed books. They admit that there is greater peace and security in the land. At the same time *burkut* which, as they understand it, is a gift of God, has forsaken the land.

The prevalence of this idea among industrial classes could be understood and even justified, for there can be no doubt that the indigenous industries have greatly suffered from the British connection. But the agricultural classes have no grounds for entertaining such ideas. It is in respect of protecting and promoting their interests that England has done its best work in India, and it is both the duty and the interest of educated Indians to explain to them that such is the case. To confine ourselves to agricultural products alone, it is true that the cultivator can no longer let his cattle eat up the standing crop 'lest it should rot on the ground'. It is also true that the Sipahi can no longer buy ghi at 30 Seers a rupee, and thus, maintain a large family in comfort on Rs. 5 per mensem. They, therefore, have grounds for believing that *burkut* has left the land. But is it not true that if it has left from one door it has come back from another ? If the agricultural classes were less improvident and not so hopelessly entangled in the meshes of the *mahajun* the new type of burkut, resulting from increase in the value of products, would have been more apparent to them than it is. It is significant that the masses do not appreciate the benefits of free exportations of raw

products. But, then, what is the use of our having educated men in the land if they can not enlighten ignorant masses of their countrymen and correct notions which are based on misapprehension of fact ?

In this connection we may be allowed to point out that one of the chief duties of the proposed Mahommedan organisation will be to try and interpret to the masses the intentions of the Government. We believe the movers intend to place this matter in forefront of their programme. While occasions for the representation of grievances and demands will, probably, be few and far between, they will have to work continually and/consistently for the removal of pernicious superstitions which lead the masses to take a distorted view of Government measures. They cannot correct old habits of thought by means of occasional speeches. If the whole thing is not to end in tall talk the organisers of the new movement will have to undertake the work of educating public opinion in right earnest. Facilities for this work are at present, practically, non-existent; for the truth is that among Mahommedans there are very few people who understand politics, specially their integral part-economics. Politics ! We know what the word signifies to many of us. Thanks to the labours of some gentlemen, it has, practically, come to mean a mild type of collision with Government. This is one reason why many influential Mahommedans will be chary of joining the movement. They need heve no such scruples. The adhesion of gentlemen who are associated with Aligarh—be they from the Punjab, Behar or any other province—will be a guarantee that politics will mean no such thing. What is now being done is—as we explained—mostly tentative. All that is certain is that we badly want a political organisation on the lines which have been already indicated. Under the circumstances it would be inadvisable for the most scrupulous of us to keep aloof and thus to deprive himself of a vote in the final settlement. We trust Mahommedans would not make a mistake in this matter. It is not a good policy for intelligent and influential men to keep aloof from public movements specially when there is a movement which it would be infeasible to carry on without their full consent and active support.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, August 1903.

21

THE TRIBUNE ON MAHOMMEDANS AND POLITICAL AGITATION

It will be within the Recollection of our readers that about a couple of years ago the Hon'ble Syed Hussein Bilgrami, writing to the *Pioneer*, denounced the Congress and its leaders in forcible terms and very politely

consigned the latter to the gallows. This explosion on the part of one who is rightly considered one of the shining lights of Mahommedan community, was evoked by the attention drawn in the columns of the same journal by Mr. Alfred Nundy to a change he noticed in the attitude of Mahommedan leaders towards taking part in political agitation. The Nawabs Mohsinool-Moolk and Fateh Nawaz Jung had at a public meeting in Lucknow given expression to sentiments which showed an anxiety for a departure from the policy of aloofness which had been adopted in the time of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and had indicated a desire for a better understanding with other classes to the end that by a joint cooperation the welfare of the people at large might be promoted. Mr. Morrison. in his self assumed character or protector of the Mahommedan community, came to the rescue of his proteges and tried to explain away the speech of the Nawab Mohsinool-Moolk, out much to his chagrin found himself repudiated by a large section of intelligent Mahommedans, who through the columns of their journal in Calcutta informed him that he was transgressing his duties as Principal of the College by interfering in political matters, and called upon the Trustees to curb their irrespressible subordinate. It was at this juncture that the Hon'ble Syed Hussein rushed into the affray and made up for the lack of argument by the violence of his sentiments in suggesting that hanging was too good for the Congress leaders. But he had counted without his host, for the Nawab Fateh Nawaz Jung, in a well-reasoned and temperately worded letter to the Pioneer, administrated to his former colleague in Hyderabad a well-merited castigation, and pointed out that Mr. Nundy had by no means exaggerated the change that had taken place in the feeling of the Mahommedans as regards their attitude towards other communities and their desire to take part in the future in political agitation for the benefit of the community. And similar opinions were expressed by that scholarly and liberal-minded man Mr. Syed Ali, who lately retired to England after having for some years filled the position of Home Secretary in the Nizam's Government. He also repudiated the ferocious sentiments to which expression had been given by his brother.

To those who have cared to watch the progress of events, it was clear that the time would soon come when in place of isolated expressions of opinion we would hear the voice of the community by means of carefully organised public meetings. And this has come to pass, for the first of these meetings was held at Saharanpur, at which the Nawab Mushtaq Hussain, late Revenue Secretary of Hyderabad, was to deliver address on the desirability of the formation of a Political Association for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of the Mahommedan community. Having to meet the Commissioner on some urgent business the Nawab was unable to attend the meeting, but his place was ably filled by Maulvi Abdulla Jan, who eloquently enlarged on the apathy of his community, and gave it as his deliberate opinion that the time had arrived for the Mahommedans to agitate for their political rights, and to do this in the form of an organised and respectable body of responsible

men. He added that 'when the National Congress was started in 1885 the Mussulmans were indifferent, as their revered leader, the late Sir Syed Ahmed, was opposed to their joining the Congress, on the ground that it was too strong a dose for the feeble Mussulman constitution, but they now found that it was necessary to beg unitedly for political concession from Government for the preservation of their community and this they could do without hostility to other communities.' The antagonism towards the Indian National Congress, it was suggested, should be withdrawn, and the two Associations were to work hand in hand. The reasons for not giving a complete adhesion to the National Congress were, the speaker said, the demand made by the latter for representative institutions and for public appointments by open competition, both which demands were, he thought, injurious to Mahommedan interests. As regards both these subjects there seems to be a good deal of misapprehension in the minds of our Mahommedan friends, but here we need do no more than reiterate what has been written and spoken so often – that a calm and un-prejudiced survey of the whole question will carry conviction to any fair-minded seeker after truth that in case these demands were granted they would not necessarily be productive of harm to any particular community in India, for the Government when granting the concessions would take care to safeguard the interests of every community. This being the case, there seems no reason whatever that now that the Mahommedans have decided on throwing off the chains with which they had been hitherto bound, that they should allow sentimental objections to stand in the way of common and united agitation without which it is not an easy task to hope for any reform in the administration of the country, or for securing such privileges as are denied us at present. At all events we ought to be thankful even for small mercies. It is gratifying to us to find that our Mahommedan friends have at least realised the fact that in resorting to political agitation for their rights the Hindus were not committing an atrocious and unpardonable act, as was suggested by certain mischievous persons. And it is still more gratifying to find that under certain limitations the Mahommedans are willing to make common cause with the Hindus. Dr. Wallace, the accredited representative of the Eurasians; has also given expression to very liberal sentiments indicating that as between his community and the rest of the people of India there is no reason for the existence of any antagonistic feeling, but that joint action for the common benefit is not only possible but desirable. We seem to express the hope that it may result in drawing in untold blessings upon a country as to which no one community can say that it has a greater or lesser interest than another.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, M 1903.

22

RELATIONS BETWEEN MAHOMMEDANS AND HINDUS

We believe it admits of no doubt that India is gradually rising higher and higher in the scale of civilisation. At the same time the masses, the great unwashed, as they would be termed in Europe, are a veritable mill-stone round India's neck. Under these circumstances it is the duty of educated Indians to understand the influence of the masses and to with stand it, and to clarify it, as far as possible. Duty demands that we should understand and try to rise. Our masses, and our own interests as a separation and superior order of society also make the same demand.

Increased intelligence among the masses is, we believe, necessary both for our comfort and increased property. It is still more necessary for 'a greater fusion of Indian races, and consequently for the raising of our status as citizens of the Empire. The masses - it should be remembered—are a great force both socially and politically. They exercise considerable influence on the well-being of the higher strata of society. But being what they are the backwards among the backwards—the influence which emanates from them is mostly of the undesirable class.

It is said that the relations between the Hindus and Mahommedans have become of late worse than they used to be. It is further said that this state of things is due to the action of educated classes. In both of these statements there is a great deal of truth, but having repeated the statements we must be allowed to comment on them. There is little doubt that during the last quarter of the late lamented 19th century, the relations between Hindus and Mahommedans underwent a change for the worse. But it is, we believe, a mistake to attribute it wholly to the educated classes. If we are asked to account for it, we shall ask you to consider with us the share of the classes as well as the masses in bringing about a state of tension.

Man proposes but God disposes. Just before the period of strife set in, there was a distinct movement among the educated Indians of both sections for political union and social harmony. What was the state of relations between the two communities when the Ilbert Bill was introduced, the question of age, in connection with the Civil Service Examination, was attracting great attention. It was felt that the low standard which then prevailed was unnecessarily and unjustly hampering the Indian candidates, and that, secondly, mere boys were being sent out to administer the country. It is true that in this matter there was not much room for difference of opinion between Hindus and Mahommedans. At the same time, even if they agreed on this question with the Bengali patriots, Mahommedan patriots need not have gone the length of worshipping—as it were— at the same shrine as the Hindus. But this is exactly what they did. That stout-hearted patriot—

Babu Surindre Nath Benerji—undertook to travel over the country in connection with this question. He came to Aligarh also. A meeting was here held in the Institute Hall, and it was, as every body knows, presided over by Sir Syed Ahmed. Our late lamented leader made a very brief speech on that occasion. But he fully supported the movement, and the present writer who was present, understood that he generally supported the talented emissary of Bengal who was to address the meeting. Babu Surindre Nath spoke next, and you may rest assured that he did not confine his remarks to the age question. We are not referring to any printed record of the proceedings, but there is a distinct impression on the writer's mind that Mr. Beck, then a mere novice in Indian politics, found himself in an awakward position that fateful evening. 'We pay the taxes and these gentlemen' (said the speaker as he pointed towards the only European present) 'these gentlemen spend and enjoy them as they please'.

That evening, as we said, was a fateful evening. It is memorable in more ways than one. The like of it the writer has never since seen, for he has never since been present at a meeting where on political or quasi-political matters Mahomedans and Hindus were swayed by the same sentiments.

We shall presently revert to the masses and their influence. But before doing so we must indicate the influences which did not emanate from the masses but all the same caused division and split Two such matters and their consequent influences suggest themselves at this moment. The introduction of local self-Government demonstrated that the interests of a minority need special protection. And the National Congress, which in its earlier stages was more dreadful than it now is, demonstrated that not only the interests of Mahommedens, but their inner sentiments also, cannot be thrown into the joint family stock.

Some of our readers, we feel, will here raise the hand of protest. Yes, we see their hands are uplifted. If they would allow us to do so, we shall take their hands into our own with the most friendly sentiments. We shall go further. So far as the writer is concerned he can say from the bottom of his heart that he does not like the split. He has discussed the matter with a number of educated Mahommedans. They are, generally speaking, of the same mind. We are sorely grieved that affairs should have taken the turn they unhappily did. We do not like, we do not enjoy the existing estrangment. If local self-Government has brought it about, curse on local self-Government. If education has led to it, cursed be education and all its pompous pretensions. We shall now indicate another class of influences.

Again we say, man proposes but God disposes. Was it your doing, gentle, protesting friend, or this scribler's either that the Mohurrum and Desehra fell simultaneously for some years during the same period ? These festivals not only occur but fall almost literally, for the sun and the moon send them down and settle their dates We know that our friend did not take an active part in riots which ensured. For himself the writer can say

that he, in his private capacity, has never been within a mile of a religious riot. But does that effect the main situation ? The reader and the writer and their particular friends are powerless in such matters—as powerless, as insignificant as a few drops would be in a roaring sea.

This matter leads us to another matter and a small story. We have not used our sticks in a religious riots, but we are not sure (are we) that we have not used our pens. It was only the other day that we came across a printed copy of a petition sent up from a small Oudh district against the local Mahommedan officers of Government. We do not find fault with the talented lawyer who made a case against the officers of law on paper. But there is a moral attached to this matter, and that moral we beg leave to point out. When the masses fight over religion, the educated classes also feel the effect. They are drawn into the vortex irresistibly, and possibly, unresisting. There are excellent reasons of it. Take, home associations and surroundings. Taking education and enlightment for your criterion where would you place the dearly beloved queens of our harems ? With the classes or the masses ? There are masses ingrafted on the classes in other ways also. In fact the classes cannot dissociate themselves from the masses. This is their share in the matter and a large share it is. If the masses fight, the classes write and write in anger and bitterness. If we were further consulted in the matter we would tell a story. There was a war and in the course of it a party of soldiers once arrested their enemy's trumpeter. The trumpeter was carrying no arms, so he protested. 'Why do you arrest me, I don't fight'. The captors admitted that much, but pointing to the bugle they said 'What is that ? You don't fight yourself but you sound the note which sends the soldiers flying at each other'.

Whether the story illustrates the general attitude of educated classes with accuracy, may be open to question. But there can be little doubt that in two recent instances, at any rate, they acted the trumpeter with some credit. The anti-cow-killing agitation, which led to some unnecessary cow-killing and a big holo-caust of human lives, was not an affair of the masses only. India being an agricultural country, the cow occupies an important place in its internal economy. Consequently, towards the close of the 19th century it occurred to some educated people that cow-killing should be put a stop to The uneducated masses simultaneously came to the same conclusion, but they did so on religious grounds. This unanimity, which was probably a coincidence, led to a campaign against the beef-eaters and to a determined attempt to overawe them.

The second and the latest case in point concerns a legacy which has been bequeathed to these provinces by Sir Antony Patrick Macdonnell. A respected contemporary of ours—the *Albashir* of Etawah – is writing an interminable series of articles on the subject, and it was only a few weeks ago that we had the honour of noting that the 67th article had actually come out. Little need, therefore, is there of our doing anything more than indicate the matter.

We have offered these remarks with a definite object. We desire that in the light of these facts and of the much more valuable ideas which the reader himself no doubt entertains, he should consider whether an *entente cordiale* between Hindus and Mahommedans is easy to bring about, and easy to keep? If a single resolution of Government can create discord and disunion, the inherent weakness of our position as allies and fellow-country-men must be obvious to all. Indeed so badly off are we, in this respect, that we have often thought it was a case for prayers rather then prescription. For some time an improvement in our mutual relations has been declaring itself. We mention it with pleasure specially, as we don't want to write a tragedy. If life lasts we shall probably be better friends some day.

Source **: The Aligarh Institute Gazette, May 1903.**

23

A CIRCULAR LETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MAHOMMEDAN EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

I shall feel obliged if you would kindly send me information regarding the following points. I know it is no easy matter to collect the required information, as it would tax much of your leisure and thought to do it, but I sincerely believe you will be amply repaid for the trouble when the desired information will be turned to account.

(*a*) How many Mussulman Societies are there in your district and what are their names or titles? What are their aims and how are they carried into effect? Do the Societies do some earnest work or are they living under the shadow of mere names? Who are their Presidents, Secretaries, and leading members. If possible kindly send me all such papers as contain the proceedings of the Societies, their reports, rules, regulations, bye-laws, and so on.

(*b*) How many Mahommedan Barristers, Vakils, and enlightened gentlemen, are there at your place. What are their names and addressess, and how far and in what form of communal or Indian matters they are interested.

(*c*) How many Maulvies and Ulama are there at your place, such as are men of learning position, and influence. What are their names and addresses. What are generally their views regarding modern English Education.

(*d*) How many of the nobility are there among you who may be thought earnest in devoting their leisure and money to matters of communal interest. I know there would be few of this type; however, a list of the nobility of

your place will enable us to try to induce when by correspondence or by personal conferences to help us.

I should like to tell you here that my main object to gain the solicited information is to know how many of us in India are in touch with the great problems of our National Regeneration, and how far we can succeed in enlisting their sympathies with our aims. This information we want from all parts of India, and this will enable us to see things more clearly in their actual state. Personally I believe the information will supply a great want.

In concluding I beg to ask your pardon for the trouble I am constrained to impose on you, and I trust that you will see your way to write to me at an early date all about the men and Societies at your place.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, September 1903.

24

THE TRIBUNE ON MAHOMMEDANS AND POLITICS

To the October Number of the *Hindustan Review* Mr. Haider Ali Qureshi contributes an important paper on the subject which heads this article. It is not often that we come across outspoken utterances by Mahommedan gentlemen of position who can think for themselves and who have the good of their community at heart. It is, therefore, refreshing to read what Mr. Qureshi writes. That Mr. Qureshi is a sincere well-wisher of his community is evident in every sentence of his paper; and it is also clear that his love for his community has not closed his eyes to the best interests of the country. He knows that Hindus and Mahommedans in India speak a common language, observe common customs, and labour under common disabilities and wrongs. A common motherland, a common language, common nationality, common political condition and a common Sovereign : it is difficult to conceive of greater community of interest than is implied in all this. Mr. Qureshi believes that the policy adopted by several co-religionists of his, *viz.*, that of antagonism to the Hindus—is a suicidal one. It is based partly on hypocrisy, and partly on jealousy, both of which are very harmful to the best interests of the country.

Mr. Qureshi begins with a reference to the decay of Islamic power and authority all the world over, He says that the Moorish Empire in Spain and the Mogul Empire in India are things of the past. The condition of Persia, he says, is deplorable and Turkey is in a still worse plight. He says that 'the whole of Europe is bent upon driving the Turks out of Constantinople; and

the country is dwindling very fast. The 'sick man' of Europe is lying on his death bed, and his end is expected every moment. The vultures are wheeling aloft in the air, anxious to devour the body. Morocco has not many years to enjoy its independence. The process of disintegration has already begun in the country. Egypt is hopelessly lost. It can never get rid of the incubus of English control. Poor Mullah, his enemies grudge him even the sandy and in hospitable deserts of the Sahara. Let him remember the fate of the brave Mahdis. I fear he will be soon gathered to his predecessors. Afghanistan is the only country which, it is believed, has a hopeful future and promises to develop into a great and powerful State'. What Mr. Qureshi says is correct in every particular. What is happening to Islamic States just now is nothing more nor less than the fate of all things Eastern before the onward march of Western progress and civilisation. The decay of China is another instance in point. Nothing that pertains to the East can stand before the irresistible march of the triumphal car of Europe. The whole world is now practically at the feet of Europe. The Europeans are in a position to lay down the law for the rest of the world. The wave of Imperialism which has swept all over Europe has encouraged the nations of that continent to entertain very exaggerated notions of their importance. They believe that they are the chosen people of the Lord, and that the rest of the world has been created only for their service and benefit. Islamic nations and States are of the East, Eastern, and they have neither the strength nor the stamina to resist the vigorous inroads of European conquest and force. Nothing that the Mahommedans of India can do will in the least stop the process we have referred to.

Mr. Qureshi attributes Mussulman decay and degeneration to the fact that though Mahommedans are great conquerors they are not capable rulers and governors. Their past history, he thinks, shows that while they conquered great countries, they could not consolidate them. Their career of conquest and victory was, he thinks, but a transient one. This is certainly not true of India. The Mahommedan Empire in India lasted several centuries. Its decay, was by no means rapid. Nothing in the world is permanent or everlasting. Nations are born, they flourish and they decay, and Islam can be no exception to this great truth of history. Mr. Qureshi thinks that Mahommedans failed to remain a ruling race, because the people as distinct from Government showed very little interest in the political affairs of their country. The Mahommedan reliance on an absolute monarchy, and their repugnance to constitutional limitation of the power and authority of the ruling party are certainly responsible for much of the decay that easily overtakes and Empire subject to the unquestioned rule of one individual. Mr. Qureshi says that 'one man assisted only by a selfish and limited aristocracy cannot prove equal to the task. The weight of an Empire becomes too heavy to bear. Too much centralisation results in decentralisation. Each Governor becomes independent in his province. There are rivalries and jealousies. There are factions and parties. There is discontent and dissatisfaction. Rebellions break out and civil wars ensue. Anarchy and

disorder soon prevail. The central power is too weak to exercise its authority. The king believing himself to be irresponsible becomes a tyrant, entirely forget ful of his duties. And then what of his fantastic whims and vagaries. He plays ducks and drakes with the public money. He gives himself up to luxury and pleasure. He forgets all about the State and its cares. The aristocracy follow in his footsteps. The demoralization of Government is the necessary outcome. Enemies find an opportunity of invading the country. The imbecile king, with a degenerate aristocracy cannot resist the attack. After a series of shameful defeats disgraceful surrenders and indiscriminate slaughters the Mahommedan State becomes a thing of the past'. What Mr. Qureshi says is not applicable exclusively to Mahommedan States. Degeneration and decay like that is the common fate of nations as well as individuals that do not take care of themselves.

Mr. Qureshi takes up an unassailable position when he says that the present indifference of the Mahommedans of India to politics is harmful to their best interests. It is certainly very much to be regretted that there are Mahommedan gentlemen of position and influence who tell their co-religionists to keep aloof from all political agitation. In some cases they go a little further and preach that they should oppose all political agitation directed against the system of government in vogue in this country. Mr. Qureshi deeply deplores this policy. He says that 'we Indians are living under a foreign Government whose interests are quite antagonistic to our interests, and whose point of view is quite different from our point of view. Its actions therefore cannot be always based upon justice and disinterestedness. Why should we not, then, protest against such actions of the Government, when we are given the liberty and allowed the freedom of speech and thought to demand justice and to have our grievances redressed ? We are happy or unhappy as our Government is good or bad. A mere stroke of the official pen can make India prosperous and miserable. If our Government were benevolent, industries and commerce would flourish; the system of education would be sound; terrible famines would no longer visit the country, and grim poverty would cease to stare us in the face.' In constitutional agitation lies the best safeguard of a country such as India against maladministration. Mahommedans are as intimately concerned in the political progress and good government of the country as the Hindus, and there is no reason why they should not take part in constitutional agitation. The Government of India is a great and complicated political organism. The working of its various parts can never be free from friction and disturbance, especially when the personal interest of the rulers of the country conflict with those of the ruled. To say that the Government of India is above criticism is very wrong, and to act upon such an erroneous belief is simply suicidal. Ultimately the Mahommedans are bound to lose on account of their policy to keep aloof from political agitation. They are greatly mistaken if they think that they will get all that is their due merely by pleasing the Anglo-Indian officials. We know that the more shortsighted among them think more of their

own personal interests than of those of the community which they profess to lead. It is quite possible for some men to secure personal favours by pleasing European officials, but the community is in no way benefitted by such an arrangement. In fact, it loses all round in the end. It loses in influence, in self-respect and in all those qualities which go to make good citizens.

Mr. Qureshi holds very sound views on this point. He is quite right in holding that Mahommedan antagonism to political movements at present conducted by their fellow-country-men is a great mistake, and does not at all rebound to the credit of his co-religionists. He says 'our lot is now thrown in with the Hindus. Our destinies are now connected with their destinies. We shall rise and fall together. If we join the Congress and enhance its importance, we shall be rendering an extremely useful service to the country. Among with our selfish notions that we are numerically less than the Hindu, and that we want to start a separate Mahommedan political organisation, that India will, one day, possess a representative government is a mere ideal. Its realisation is yet as far as ever. The work in which the co-operation of the Mahommedans is required is of a more practical nature. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had his own reasons for not joining the Congress; but I am of opinion that our keeping aloof from the Congress has contributed, to a great extent, to our backwardness and degradation.'

Mr. Qureshi's exhortation to his co-religionists is as powerful as it is eloquent. It is bound to carry conviction to all except those who are blinded by self-interest. He says that 'we have fallen far behind the times. We cannot follow the politics of the country. Indian economic problems, the solution of which is so important in the eyes of our Hindu brothers, are mere puzzles to us. Our Editors are as muddle-headed as ourselves. There is not a single Mahommedan daily newspaper conducted in English. The *Observer*, the *Madras Mahommedan*, and the *Moslem Chronicle* of Calcutta are dull reading. There are very few good Mahommedan writers and speakers in the country. We are flatterers, hypocritos, and ji-huzoors; the Hindu are true, sincere, and honest. Our policy is vague and undefined; their policy is clear and definite. Our policy is weak and feeble; their policy is strong and vigorous. Mr. Syed Husain Bilgrami, one of the leading Mahommedans of today, is denounced by every body, while Sir Gooroo Das Banerji and Mr. Gokhale have become heroes. There is a sad lack of able man in our community. The Hindu community has advanced far ahead of us. It has produced hosts of able writers, orators and thinkers, and what a striking contrast our Educational Conference presents to the Congress. In the Conference we recite useless poems and make indifferent speeches about education, the importance of which a Hindu is too advanced to question, while in the Congress they discuss weighty problems of the Empire.' Mr. Qureshi's advice to his co-religionists is to join the Hindus in their political agitation. No more sound and excellent advice could, we think, be given to the Mahommedans of India. To keep aloof from all political agitation merely because of the fear that in case representative institu-

tions are granted to the country the Mahommedans being in the minority will be at a discount is to take an extremely short-sighted view of the case. Representative government for India, as we all know, is not at all a question of practical politics. There are many things connected with the general welfare of the people in which Hindus and Mahommedans can co-operate together. By making common cause they can do much to improve their status as citizens of the British Empire; and by falling foul of each other they do all that they can to retard their progress both political and other.

Source : The Tribune, 8 December 1906.

25

MOHSIN-UL-MULK ON KHALIFA AND KHILAFAT

Khalifa and Khilafat are both very misleading words. The appellations used for the Sultan of Turkey *viz.* Ameer-ul-momineen (Chief of the faithful) and Khalifat-ul-Muslimeen (the Caliph of the Muslims) have produced a great many misconceptions in the minds of Europeans at the present day. It seems necessary therefore that, following the example of Sir Syed who wrote an excellent article at the time of the Greco Turkish War, we should on this occasion explain the question clearly and set forth the meaning of it.

We will not discuss the word Khalifa nor need we enter into the question whether in our day it is right to call any king a Khalifa. But we take the words Sultan and Khalifa as synonyms denoting nothing more than a kingship.

The Mahommedans who call the Sultan of Turkey a Khalifa may be divided into two classes—those over whom the Sultan rules ; and those over whom the Sultan does not rule. Now if the Turks and other subjects of the Sultan, call him a Khalifa in the sense that they owe him obedience in all matters, they are possibly justified. But the Mahommedans, we in India, and others who are not under the Turkish rule, and over whom the Sultan cannot exercise any authority, and who are not bound in any way to obey him, if we call the Sultan a Khalifa, we do so merely to show our respect for the greatest Mussulman king whose position is rendered still more important by his being the servant of the sacred Harems, the Ca'aba. It should on no account be understood to mean that we regard him as our ruler in any way and consider his orders binding upon us. We use the word Khalifa merely as a title of honour, and it does not follow that because we do so we are ever likely to oppose the Government under which we actually live. In times past also,

when the Caliphate was divided into three parts and the Abbassides, Fattimites and the Umaiyyads ruled over Baghdad, Egypt and Spain respectively, each of the rulers of the three dynasties was called a Khalifa in the sense that he exercised the powers and prerogatives of a Khalifa within his own territorial jurisdiction. But in spite of the fact that they were all called Khalifas, no man in Baghdad could say that as regards the authority vested in a Khalifa, the ruler of Baghdad was the Khalifa's of Spain or Egypt : nor was the Khalifa of Spain or Egypt acknowledged as being the Khalifa of Baghdad in that country.

If Mahommedans and Europeans know the religious views held by the Mahommedan Jurists and Doctors with regard to the use and application of the word Khalifa and the duties and rights pertaining to 'hat office, there would be no room for any misconception.

The late Maulana Shah Wali-ullah defines Khilafat thus :—

'It denotes a form of popular Government the object of which is to establish religion by reviving learning; by preserving the articles of faith; by setting up Jehad with all the incidents connected there with such as the maintenance of armies and military accountrements ; by spreading justice ; by punishing offenders ; by ordering virtuous conduct and for bidding vice ; and by doing all acts in the capacity of a viceroy of the holdy Prophet'.

This brief and concise definition of Khilafat and the duties and prerogatives pertaining to the office of Khalifa, is explained in all the Theological works on the subject. In *Ahkam-us-Sultania*, which is a standard work it is written thus ; In general matters, there are ten duties binding on a Khalifa ;

1. The protection and defence of religion in accordance with all those principles which have been established and upon which all the ancient holy men are agreed. For instance if any Mahommedan introduces any new thing into religion, or swerves from the right path by reason of any doubt arising in his mind, if would be the duty of the Khalifa to satisfy him with proper arguments and show him the truth. He is entitled to use all the lawful means in his power necessary to keep religion safe and free from all dangers and decay.
2. To do justice between man and man, by passing impartial judgment after hearing the points of dispute. It is the duty of the Khalifa to spread justice in the country so that the weak might not suffer at the hands of those that are strong.
3. To preserve peace and quiet in the country, so that people may engage in their work with safety, and may travel at will for their benefit.
4. To punish offenders according to law in order that the respect for Divine authority may be maintained, and no wrong be done to anybody.
5. To strengthen the boundaries of the Kingdom by the maintenance of military forces, so that no invaders may dare to effect entrance into

the country and shed the blood of Muslims and Zimees.

6. To make war with those who after having been duly invited to accept the faith, persist in their old beliefs, until they either become converts or Zimees.
7. To realize Khiraj (money levied on smaller kingdoms as protection money) and charitable funds which religion has prescribed.
8. To take care of the Public funds and to control the expenditure with wisdom, being neither extravagant nor too sparing.
9. To appoint able and well-intentioned men to the high offices of the state in order that all work may be conducted in a way that is proper.
10. To exercise personal supervision in all matters so that religion may be safe and the progress of the country may be ensured. It is not fit to give the work to be done by others while the Khalifa himself either devotes himself to religious practices or worldly pleasures. For at times those upon whom trust is placed prove false and even well wishers are known to deceive. God says in the Koran 'O David I have made three Khalifa in the world, therefore do thou justice among men and do not follow thy fancies for thou shalt stray from the way of God.' In this extract God has not only enjoined upon the Khalifa to do justice himself but he is also declared inexcusable and lost if he follows his own fancies in anything.'
11. In view of the duties and rights enumerated and explained above it is impossible for any man'of even very common understanding, to think that the Sultan of Turkey is the Khalifa of the Indian Mussulmans or that the Mahommedans of India can call him their Khalifa in the real sense of the term. Evidently, the Sultan cannot exercise any of the powers and prerogatives of the Khalifa over the Mahommedans of this country nor are they in any matter bound by their religion to obey the Sultan. They are subjects of the King Emperor and owe their allegiance to him alone. The commands of the King Emperor are religiously binding upon them and I think there is hardly any single Mahommedan who thinks or wants to act as though it were otherwise. It is therefore quite wrong to discuss the question of the Khalifat in the senses explained above and to call the Sultan Khalifa with the meaning which the word conveys.

But by denying Khilafat it does not follow that the Indian Mussulmans have no love for the Sultan of Turkey and that they do not care for the safety of the Turkish Government. On the contrary, the truth is that all the Mahommedans have great sympaty and love for the Sultan. They all wish with one heart the stability of the Turkish rule and earnestly pray to God that friendly relations between their Government *i.e.* the British Government and the Sultan may be firmly established. Those of us who say that they do not care a bit for the Sultan and for Turkey, are either flatterers of the British Government whom it is certain, the Government will never believe, or

they have no love for religion ; they also go against the natural law.

It should be remembered that sympathy for religion and for a community is quite distinct from political relations. It is not necessary that those who love the Sultan because he is of the same religion should not also be loyal and faithful to the British Government under which they live. Nor does it follow because we are subjects of the British Government that therefore we should not wish for the safety of the Sultan or other Mussulman Rulers and be sorry for them if anything happens to them. Loyalty towards our Government does not exclude the idea of sympathy with one's coreligionists. Those who think that the two are exclusive of each other, are ignorant both of their religious duties and of their political relations. There are many things in this world in which as a matter of duty one has to do acts for which by natural sentiment one feels sorry. For instance if any one of us is made a judge and his own son or father is charged before him he would as an impartial judge, if the case is proved, pass sentence upon him although he would feel extremely sorry to do so.

Thus also, if, God forbid, there be a war between our Government and any Mahommedan power, we should, as loyal subjects be on the side of our own Government, but as Mahommedans we should also be sad about it.

And we think that no true Mahommedan in India holds a different opinion.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, June 1906.

26

THE TRIBUNE ON HINDUS AND MAHOMMEDANS

The recent action of the Principal of the Mahommedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, in prohibiting the students to attend a lecture on the relations between Hindus and Mahommedans may have been taken merely in the interest of discipline, but it encroached perilously upon the personal liberty of the boys. Aligarh is not a station at which public meetings and public lectures are very common. The lectures was delivered by a well-known public speaker, whose position and tactfulness might be trusted to prevent him from saying anything to embitter the relations between the Hindus and Mahommedans. In point of fact, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's lectures was eminently conciliatory and prefectly acceptable to both Hindus and Mahommedans, and the student of the Aligarh College could have been permitted to listen to the lecture with interest and profit.* It is a pleasant surprise to find that even at this day college students can be successfully

restrained from attending political meetings. But the meeting in question was not a political meeting. It was a public debate of a question in which Hindus and the Mahommedans, and not the Government, are vitally interested, and the solution of which will rest ultimately with Hindu and Mahommedans students at college to-day. Those students who were prevented from atteading the meeting and listening to the lecture at Aligarh will in due time, take their share in helping to improve or make worse the relations between Hindus and Mahommedans.

As regards the bringing of the students at the Aligarh College we were not aware that all politics is forbidden to them even after college hours. On the contrary, some of the authorities connected with the college and even Mr. Theodore Beck, the first Principal, were active politicians and political spouting went on with great zeal. It is true that the politics was some what different from the general trend of politics in this country, but that was only a difference of detail and to hold conflicting views has always been the privilege of politicians. These differences were very ably and very clearly explained by the writer of certain open letters in these pages to the students of the students of M.A.O. College. In a few words the position might be thus explained. Mahommedan youths were advised to abstain from the Congress and what were termed Hindu agitations because they were not as advantageously placed as Hindus. The Hindus had got all they would from Government and they might agitate for more. Mahommedans had not got their fair share of offices under the Government and therefore they wought not to join the Hindus. They must first get their full share of patronage from the Government. What they will do next need not yet be discussed. Therefore the utmost that can be said is that a certain section of Mahommedans is advised to stand aloof from a certain section of Hindus, for what may be called utilitarian considerations, but there is no encouragement to direct hostility between the two communities, although this has been unavoidable by the attitude and speeches of some leaders.

Debates of abstract political questions were encouraged in the debating clubs of the Aligarh College, and for sometime the debates were very satisfactory. But for sometime past a change has been noticeable in the spirit of the debates. Publicity has been avoided as far as practicable, but intelligence of this kind always leaks out. Whatever the older and wiser men of any community may think young men have the same generous impulses everywhere, and the young students of the Aligarh College are beginning to realise that Government patronage cannot satisfy their aspirations for all time. The duty of an educated young men does not terminate with a berth in Government service, for the choice of a profession, fit if the finding of the wherewithal to live were all the ambition of man's life he would be no wise distinguishable from an animal. The ideal now placed before the Aligarh students is admittedly a low one and no amount of rhetoric can invest it with dignity. It is no wonder therefore that the students are beginning to be

dissatisfied with it and are beginning to feel for their country and their countrymen the same sympathy that animates patriotic young men in other countries.

It is absurd to say that there is any real ill-feeling between Hindus and Mahommedans. There are occasional village and religious disputes but the two communities have been living in amity and at peace for centuries. By race they are the same for most of the Mahomedans were Hindus either a few generations or a long time ago. It has been justly observed that the present difference is confined to a limited number and is absolutely artificial. For the source of difference is only a certain number of appointments and these can concern only a small number of people. The authorities are everywhere giving large employment to Mahommedans. Even a ruler like Sir Bampfylde Fuller is unlisting Mahommedan sympathy by issuing circulars for the wider sympathy of Mahommedans. Even in our own Provinces correspondents are complaining that Mahommedans are already getting more than their fair share of the offices under Government. A dispute of this kind cannot go on for ever. If the Mahommedans complain of unequal patronage their complaint will be soon remedied, and it is evident they will get more than to what they are entitled. It must be also borne in mind that the Hindus did not start political agitation because they had not received a due proportion of Government appointment. Their agitation is due to intellectual growth. They came to realise that in order to rise as a nation something more was needed than mere public appointments. A nation of servants is not great nation. The English themselves do not depend wholly or even mainly upon the public services for a living. And those who make a living are not satisfied with merely earning their bread.

The arguments that are employed to persuade Mahommedans to refrain from joining political agitation are all temporary, and one evil effect therefrom is that the Mahommedans, or at any rate the educated section, are holding aloof from the industrial movement known as the Swadeshi movement. This is a very serious loss as we are certain the Mahommedans have great industrial capacity and their fine work was at one time famous in the world. The disadvantage of want of education are being remedied every day, and the time must come when mere service will not satisfy the Mahommedans as it did not satisfy the Hindus. Then it will be recognised that the Hindus and the Mahommedans must form one nation, and no artificial barrier set up between them can stand for any length of time. Whichever section tries to injure the other will suffer itself in the long run, because their interests are mutually inter-dependent. Both under Hindu and Mahommedan rulers both the communities have lived at peace and have enjoyed equal rights. Even at this moment Mahommedan State has a Hindu and not long ago the Dewan of Baroda was a Mahommedan. Neither Hindu nor Mahommedan has been appointed to a position of equal power or trust under the present rule, and the so-called favour to Mahommedans is merely intended to spite the Hindus,

Our conviction is that the time is not far distant when, in spite of all influences to the contrary, Hindus and Mahommedans will work together for the common good of their common country and their countrymen—Indian People.

Source : The Tribune, 20 July 1906.

27

THE ALIGARH INSTITUTE GAZETTE ON MAHOMMEDAN UNREST IN INDIA

Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's recent Open Letter to his co-religionists in India, regarding the duty and allegiance owed by them to the Khalifa, appeared at an opportune moment, but, we regret to say, has brought down upon him a storm of invective from Urdoo newspapers. Some of these reproach him with being a traitor to the national cause, and repudiate him as a leader; whilst others, do not hesitate to say that his letter was written, solely with the view of gaining Government favour—a rather absurd suggestion, considering the Nawab's advanced age; since a veteran of 70 can have little to hope for or to expect. That there is a restless feeling amongst Mahommedans is a fact, of which there can be no doubt, and the immediate cause is an idea fostered probably by foreign agents, that the recent incident at Tabah, was merely a prelude to a British occupation of Arabia and to an eventual absorption of the Turkish Empire. Thirty years ago Mahommedans in India knew very little, and as far as the general mass was concerned, caredless about the Sultan of Turkey. The extent of their knowledge was probably confined to the fact that he was the spiritual and temporal head of their co-religionists in the Turkish Empire, and as such was entitled to an extra amount of sympathy and respect. A keener interest was excited when Mr. Gladstone commenced his Bulgarian-atrocity campaign, and indignation was felt when English newspapers were full of denunciation of the Sultan. Twenty years afterwards the Sultan's victory over the Greeks led to an increased interest in his personality, and the presistent occupation by the British of Egypt and the Sudan led to a feeling that England was no longer an ally and protector, but arrival of the Turkish Khalifa, who, as Protector of the sacred towns of Mecca and Medina, is a personage towards whom all orthodox Mahommedans, in whatever country they may be resident, are bound to feel an affection and veneration. Is it therefore not unnatural that distorted accounts of the Tabah incident may have led the ignorant amongst the

Mahommedans to believe that the English threatened the supremacy, not the very existence, of the Khalifa in that spot of Arabia which is not three classes—The old-fashioned, uneducated class, bigotted in their belief and steeped in superstition, which is unable to understand the changes that the last few centuries have brought about and which believes that the Khalifa of Turkey, the survivor of the Khalifas of Baghdad, Cairo and Spain, is actually still the Khalifa to whom it owes temporal allegiance. A portion of this class goes even further and claims that the Khalifa of Roum is a spiritual kutb or ruler over the whole world. This is well illustrated by the communications of a correspondent to the last Lahore *Watan* who says that he recently dreamt he was surrounded by darkness and gloom, in which he saw everyone moving about engaged in worldly affairs. Whilst he was puzzling over this, he suddenly saw a brilliantly lighted home in which, surrounded by a number of men in bright apparel, seated at a table was a young man with a shining countenance, by whose side was an elderly person of reverent appearance. He heard a voice exclaiming : 'This is the kutb Abdul Hamid', and then he awoke. He sent a description of this dream to Hassan Nizami, the Manager of the Durga, or shrine, of the Shah Nizamuddin Auliya, at Delhi, and asked for an interpretation. The reply was that the darkness signified the worldliness in which his previous existence and that of others in the world had been passed; the illuminated house, the dawn of a new era of spirituality; the men in brilliant apparel, the saints who had been admitted to the higher circle; and the young man with the shining countenance was the new kutb, or ruler, of the Spiritual World, who although really an old man, had been made young again in order to signify his recent advancement to this exalted rank in which he would exercise a spiritual sway over the whole world. We allude to this merely to show the exaggerated importance to which a certain class of Mahommedans attach to him whom they have been brought to believe is their true Caliph, and is to that class that Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk's letter was addressed. Unfortunately this class of ignorant bigotted men is very large and comprises amongst others a number of well and fanatical tribes on the frontier, excitable and easily swayed by their religious leaders. They therefore form an element of danger which should not be disregarded.

As regards the half-educated class of Mahommedans, of whom the different colleges and schools now annually turn out a larger number, the discontent arises from another and more material source. This class now flunds itself in somewhat the same position as did the half educated Hindus who started the Congress movement, with this difference that their competitors in the race have got a twenty years start. This class of Mahommedans probably thought that its obstruction to, and abstention from, agitation would eventually bring about their own reward. But having succeeded in the first instance in preventing their coreligionists from joining the Congress and in participating in its methods, they now find themselves out in the cold. In the course of time the Congress has grown and flourished. Its adherents

have largely increased in numbers and in voicefulness. It has obtained an audience, not only in India, but also in England, and its leaders have so far compelled recognition that those most persistent in their opposition and agitation have, as it happens, received posts in the Government Councils, with titles and decorations. In one place, after having enjoyed a short tenure of office in the High Court, a Hindu Congress leader is made a Knight. Elsewhere such as one gets a C. I. E., and promptly goes to England to abuse the European authorities, whilst Congress Presidents have been made Judges of the High Courts. The native papers ask, 'If the opponents of the Government and the agitators of opposition are rewarded, why are we, who have stead fastly upheld the Government, left out in the cold ?' Take two parallel cases of the two native members of the Education Commission, like the two women at the mill, the one who opposed the Bill was 'taken' into the circle of the titled ones, and the other who supported it, Nawab Syed Hoosein Bilgrami, was 'left' in the cold. Here in Bombay one respected Mahommedan citizen, who has twice officiated as Chief Justice of the High Court, is still plain Mr. Budruddin Tyabjee, with not even a Kaiser-i-Hind Medal to adorn his manly breast. Take again the recent Royal visit. How few have been the recognitions to Mahommedans, compared with these bestowed on Hindus ? At Aligarh, the Prince paid a visit to the Institution, founded by Sir Syed Ahmed, and was brought into contact with the leading representatives of the best-education, and best-disposed of the Indian Mahommedans, by means of whose liberality this Institution has been maintained, extended, and brought to its present prosperous condition. But, whilst honours or gracious marks of recognition have followed the visits of their Royal Highnesses to almost every other part of India, up to the present time, no such substantial mark of favour has been bestowed upon the patrons of Aligarh. Again at Madras, three of the Reception Committee were selected for presentation to His Royal Highness—a European, a Hindu and a Mahommedan. The two former were decorated, but the latter was let unnoticed. Can it therefore be a matter of surprise that this non-recognition of large proportion of the Indian population should cause dissatisfaction ? It is the hope of reward that sweetens labour, but if reward is bestowed upon agitators only, what wonder if the Mahommedans say : 'Let us join the ranks of the agitator and share in their reward'— with the result that at the present moment there are thousands of Mahommedans who have joined the Congress, men, who ten or twelve years ago, would not have thought of doing so.

We have endeavoured to trace the causes of discontent among the uneducated and the half-educated classes of Mahommedans. What about the remaining class consisting of educated scholars and enlightened men of learning ? They are also in small minority. They know the absurdity of the Khalifa cry. They are, as indeed all Mahommedans are, thoroughly devoted to the British Government. But they are also human and have therefore

sympathies with their co-religionists. When they see that their passive loyalty has met with no other reward than that of neglect, they are bound to think that if they are to find a hearing, they must at least organise and first of all raise their voices, so as to call the sun to shine upon the winter of their discontent. The Congress party are only too anxious that old differences should be sunk in oblivion and that the Mahommedans should join their ranks; for they are fully aware of the importance which their adherence would add to the party. This invitation was held out by Mr. Gokhale in a recent speech before the East Indian Association in London but was declined by Mr. Ameer Ali who thought that what might be a gain to the Congress generally, would be a loss to the Mahommedans in particular, since the interests of a minority would have to yield to those of the majority. Mr Abdul Qadar, in a recent speech before the London Indian Society, on the 16th June, said that for the last three years a proposal had been under consideration to form a Mahommedan Congress organised on the lines of the present one, founded by Hindus, but as yet nothing has been done This would mean 'another Richard in the field', and the time would seem to have come to ask whether a change of policy on the part of the Government would not be wise in order to prevent the appearance on the political stage of another element of discord ? It is bad enough to have a certain small section of Hindus as our determined opponents and misrepresentators, but why should the Mahommedans be added to their ranks ? The scheme of more elected representatives foreshadowed by Mr. Morley, will, we fear, only add fuel to the fire, in a country where the Mahommedans only muster about sixty millions out of three hundred, it is scarcely likely that the Mahommedans will be strongly represented. The present discontent, if it be not handled wisely, may result in trouble, and we may be quite sure that we have rivals in Europe, who are only too ready to foster discontent, in order to serve their own interests, especially if by doing so they may add to our embarrassment at the present time.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, August 1906.

28

THE TRIBUNE ON ENGLAND AND EGYPT

Recent events have made it quite clear that among a large class of the people of Egypt there is a feeling of dissatisfaction with the British occupation of their country. It cannot be denied that there are many in Egypt who are

anxious that Great Britain should leave Egypt as early as she can. They believe that the British occupation of their country has not benefited the people to any large extent. They feel that the Egyptians have been deprived of the right to manage their own affairs, and that in the public service almost all the more important posts are occupied by Englishmen or other Europeans. The ranks of those among Egyptians who are opposed to the presence of Great Britain in Egypt are being daily reinforced by Turks who are quite as strongly opposed to England's stay in Egypt. For many years past a strong anti-British party has been growing in Egypt. It is now established beyond doubt that this party derives its inspiration from Turkey, and that among its advisers and sympathisers there are many Europeans, Germans or Frenchmen. For many years past the British occupation of Egypt has rankled as a thorn in the side of France, and the German jealousy of British territorial extension in any shape or form is now notorious. Since the conclusion of the *entente* between Great Britain and France the Government of the latter has acquiesced in the British occupation of Egypt, but it cannot be denied that the people of France would be only too glad to see British s..premacy in the land of the Pharoahs considerably weakened. As regards the Germans they are outspoken, almost brutally so, in their undisguised hatred of everything British. Germany will not fail to fan the flame of anti-British agitation in Egypt if she possibly can.

The position held by England with reference to her supremacy in Egypt is equally clear. Great Britain means to stay in Egypt at all cost. The Ministry only lately announced their decision to enforce the British garrison in the country if the anti-British garrison in the country people showed any further increase. They maintain that the command of the Suez Canal is absolutely necessary for the Great Britain to enable her to maintain her present undisputed mastery of the sea. There is no difference of opinion whatsoever with respect to the matter between Liberals and Conservatives. Great Britain cannot allow any other European Power, she has no objection theoretically to recognise the Ports as the suzerainty of Egypt, she has not the least desires to give Turkey the slightest control over the administration of the country. No Great Power of Europe is likely to interfere with the British occupation of Egypt until she is prepared to wage a war with Great Britain. They all understand the position with perfect clearness.

We have been led to make these remarks by the perusal of a short account of an interview between Mustafa Kamel Pasha, the leader of the Nationalist party in Egypt, and a representative of the *Daily Chronicle*, published in a recent issue of that journal. Mustafa Kamel Pasha came to London with the intention of laying before the British public a statement of the grievances under which the Egyptians labour at present. It has been stated in British newspapers more than once that Moslem fanaticism in Egypt is on the increase, and that it has already affected several thousands of the people. Mustafa Kamel Pasha denies in to to the existence of any kind of

fanaticism.... He affirms that there is no hatred whatever towards Christians as such. He says that 'of all Mussulmans the Egyptians are the most tolerant. The Mahommedans have lived side by side with Christians for centuries and men of all nationalities resident in Egypt have recognised our Liberalism in this respect. Many Europeans have even contributed to the national schools established among us by private subscription. Since the time of Mehomet Ali we have been extremely proud of our schools, and, in fact, of all our intellectual movements, our newspapers, and so on. We were the first Mussulman people to adopt European civilisation, and yet the English seem to regard us as natives of the Congo. For nearly a century past our young men have been sent to France or Germany or England for education, and we now enjoy quite as high a culture as the leading European States. It is absurd to compare us with Morocco or with Lake Chad, as Many English people do.' We can well understand the indignation of Mustafa Kamel Pasha at the charge of fanaticism levelled against his countrymen. Anglo-Indian newspapers in this country and many British newspapers also are fond of dubbing educated Indians as seditious, disloyal and what not. We all know perfectly well that the desire to get rid of British rule has never actuated an educated Indian in even the wildest of his dreams. Yet the Jingo Press of Great Britain does not hesitate to call educated Indians anti-British and disloyal. The leader of the National Party in Egypt asks whether it could suppose that if the Egyptians had been fanatics, the small British army of occupation could have held its own in a population of 12 millions, or that Lord Cromer could have induced the Egyptians to believe that they were happy and prosperous for twenty-four years ? Mustafa Kamel Pasha asserts that Egypt is the land of true democracy and Liberalism.

The Egyptian leader and patriot has something to say about the Denshawi executions. These executions certainly constituted a most unfortunate and regrettable affair. They produced, the Pasha says, a most painful impression on all classes. He says that 'the nation has never been so unanimous. Even the bitterest opponents of the British occupation could not have believed such an outrage possible. All Egypt from the sea to Nubia felt that such treatment was barbarous and unworthy both of ourselves and you. It will not be forgotten. Only one thing can obliterate the memory of the wrong. The British Government must recognise its error and change the principles which make such a thing possible.' He objects strongly to the tribunals established by Lord Cromer for the trial of cases between the British and Egyptians. These tribunals have absolute power and from their decisions there is no appeal. In a country under a foreign domination an impartial and just judicial tribunal is a great safeguard against the erratic and high-handed doings of an autocratic executive. Imagine for a moment India without its High Courts although the officers presiding over the tribunals are not always noted for the independence of the executive. The law courts of Egypt certainly do not command the confidence of the people. In our

own country the general belief is that it is hopeless to expect justice in cases between Europeans and Indians. The system of trial by jury on which Europeans rightly set such great store covereth a multitude of judicial failings in the British administration of India.

Mustafa Kamel Pasha has something to say about the system of education in Egypt. According to him, 'Before the British occupation all Government Schools were free, or prettily nearly free, and the children of poor parents could rise to the highest positions in the State. In fact most of the remarkable men of modern Egypt have been children of poor parents. But the British system opens these schools only to the rich, who can pay the cost of higher education. Lord Cromer has provided a feeble kind of elementary education for the poor, but no students are now admitted free into the government Schools, and among a democratic people like ourselves it is rightly regarded as a crime to prevent the poor from sharing in the highest education. This grievance alone would have sufficed to make the British administration hated.' These words certainly embody genuine grievance and a serious disability under which the Egyptians labour. Great Britain would, in our opinion, do well to take steps to redress it as early as possible. Facilities for education of all kinds should be placed at the disposal of even the poorest among the people. In India also there is a similar difference of opinion between Government and the people. Lord Curzon's overhauling of our educational system has not met with public approval, chiefly because of the fact that under the new arrangements it will be impossible for men of humble means to give University or even secondary education to their children. According to Oriental notions education is a gift and not a commodity to be bartered for silver or for gold. European or rather English ideas with respect to education are quite different, although in England itself these ideas have not in any way influenced the national system of education. Throughout Great Britain and Ireland school education is free and in the matter of technical industrial training the people are allowed every possible facility. In an Oriental country governed by an European Power education is a factor greatly tending towards peace and security. Ignorance breeds fanaticism whilst education reduces it, as light dispels darkness.

Source : The Tribune, 25 August 1906.

29

ON MAHOMMEDAN LOYALTY

Before saying anything on the above subject I wish to point out that I hold no brief for Hindus, and that this communication is not intended to defend the latter's political doings. The sole object in view is to state facts, and invite the attention of the Government and the public to an anomalous state of affairs.

What is this vaunted Mahommedan loyalty ? It consists in opposing the so-called Indian National Congress, trying to make Government regard Hindus with suspicion, and supporting the authorities as against the followers of Hinduism. A careful observer will, however, discover that the Prophet's following has scant respect for British officials and that they do not hesitate to say the worst things of British rule in connection with questions affecting their own co-religionists.

This is amply borne out by a perusal of what their newspapers, at least in this Land of the Five Rivers, have been publishing on the Tabah incident and the Egyptian executions. They have not, particularly, hesitated to blame England for both events, they charge her with sinister designs against the Islamic world, and say hard things about the honesty of the British Government. They accuse England of being in Egypt on false pretences, speak of her presence in the Nile Valley as a breach of faith, they represent the Khedive's subjects as an oppressed people, the language employed being more rabid and violent than any ever used by a Congress-walla. The *Vakil* of Amritsar denies that there is any religious fanaticism in Egypt, and says that it is her consciousness of having maltreated the Egyptians which makes England fear shadows. In its issue of the 11th June last it also appeals to the Kaiser to drive the English out of Egypt. The *Watan* of Lahore tried to prove to the world that it was not the Sultan, but England who had to eat humble pie in connection with the recent Turko-Egyptian dispute. Writing on the same subject the *Paisa Akhbar*, of Lahore, remarked that, like hungry vultures, British statesmen were ever on the look-out to snatch away portions of the Turkish Empire.

Hindus must not criticise official measures on pain of being stigmatised as disloyal, but the Mahommedans may do so without laying themselves open to objection in any way. Indeed, in their superabundant loyalty Mahommedans may go the length even of hinting at their ability to wield the sword in order to prevail upon the authorities to drop a measure, as was done by the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk in his speech against Sir Antony McDonnell's Nagri resolution. Mahommedans are also free to impute evil motives to the Government of India in connection with any of its acts. For instance, it has been alleged by more than one Mahommedan newspaper that Government's

real object in making pilgrims to Mecca undergo quarantine at Bombay is to put a stop to pilgrimage to the Hedjaz.

Writing to *Paisa Akhbar* of the 11th June last Mr. Fazal Hussain, a Lahore Barrister, says that in the event of a struggle between England and Turkey 95 per cent of the Prophet's followers in India are not likely to remain true to the allegiance they owe to the British throne. No objection has so far been taken to the remark either by the Editor or by any other Mahommedan journalist or writer.

Source : The Tribune, 30 August 1906.

[illegible]

... [illegible] the [illegible] political [illegible]. The [illegible] object in view is to [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] of the Government and the public to an [illegible] state of affairs.

What is this vaunted Mahommedan loyalty? It consists in opposing the [illegible] Indian National Congress, trying to make Government regard Hindus with suspicion, and supporting the authorities as against the followers of [illegible]. A careful observer will, however, discover that the Prophet's followers [illegible] respect [illegible] British officials and that they do not hesitate to [illegible] things of British rule in connection with questions affecting their [illegible] or [illegible].

[illegible] newspapers [illegible] at least [illegible] the Tabah incident [illegible]. They have not, particularly, hesitated to blame England [illegible] charge her with sinister designs against the [illegible] world, and [illegible] the honesty of the British Government. They [illegible] England [illegible] in Egypt on false pretences, speak of her [illegible] as a breach of faith, they represent the [illegible] as an oppressed people, the language employed being [illegible] [illegible] a Congress-walla. The [illegible] [illegible] there is any religious fanaticism in Egypt, and says that [illegible] of having [illegible] the Egyptians which makes England [illegible]. In its issue of the 11th June last it also appeals to [illegible] to drive the English out of Egypt. The *Watan* of Lahore tried to [illegible] that it was not the Sultan, but England who had [illegible] in connection with the recent Turko-Egyptian dispute. Writing [illegible] the *[illegible]* of Lahore, remarked that, like hungry [illegible] on the look-out to snatch away portions of the [illegible].

[illegible] official [illegible] of being stigmatised as [illegible] but the Mahommedans may do so without laying themselves open to [illegible]. Indeed, in their [illegible] loyalty Mahommedans may [illegible] of [illegible] their ability to wield the sword in order to [illegible] the authorities to [illegible], as was done by the Nawab [illegible] in his speech against Sir Antony McDonnell's Nagri resolution. Mahommedans are also free to impute evil motives to the Government of India in connection with any of its acts. For instance, it has been [illegible] by more than one Mahommedan newspaper that Government's

SECTION 2

PARTITION OF BENGAL

1

LETTERS FROM GEORGE HAMILTON TO CURZON

I

28 March 1899

I hear a very satisfactory account of the results of your work in India, but it was also accompanied by the observation that you were working eleven hours a day.... Now be a good fellow, and take my advice in good part, and save yourself as much as you can. I am not expressing my own views, but those of several of your best friends, when I say that one of your dangers in India is your wish to do too much work yourself.

II

16 June 1899

I rather surprised the Radicals in the House of Commons by telling them that, in my judgement, our rule in India never would be, in the strong sense of the word, a popular rule. It is a truism which has been very often expressed before, but it apparently a shock to the theories, which I assume are that, if a plebiscite was taken tomorrow as to whether our Government should or should not remain in India, and the decision was against us, we ought in compliance with that request to retire.

III

30 June 1899

You certainly are the most indefatigable of mortals : in addition to the heavy routine of administrative work, which most Viceroys find it a sufficiently heavy burden, you are re-organising all the Departments, taking up a number of most controversial and complicated questions, and now you add, on the top of all this work, a weekly correspondence with your various Governors.

IV

27 July 1899

My experience is that it is better not to try too many reforms at once, concentrate your attention on the successive changes which you wish to achieve and push them one by one vigorously forward.

V

3 August 1899

How difficult it is to combine the working of a free press with the establishment of autocratic rule. I am now beginning to see how it is that the Russian and other similarly circumstanced Governments decline to permit a free press; and I think they are right. A free press really is only compatible with a representative system and party Government tacked on to it. In that case the attacks of one sect of newspapers is counteracted by the replies of the other sect. But with an autocratic Government the whole tendency of the press must be to attack not a political party, or the Government associated with any one particular sect of politics, but to run a much to the very foundations of government, of order and of authority. Elgin used always to say that the Native Press in India were useful to him in giving him some indication of what people were thinking about. They do not seem to me to perform even that function, because, although they may poison the minds of the uneducated by their constant attacks upon British rule, yet those who write these articles and own the papers are by their training and education, so removed from the illiterate dumb masses of India that they seem to me to have little or nothing in common.

Source : Hamilton Papers : Private Correspondence, 1899.

2

LETTER FROM GEORGE HAMILTON TO CURZON

17 May 1900

The large existing preponderance of Natives in appointments above certain grades as compared with Europeans always fills me with apprehension as regards the future. That preponderance will increase rather than diminish. All the educational influences at work in India tend to widen rather than to narrow the inlets into our administrative service.... I attribute largely to his (Dufferin's) mis-management and want of judgment the origin and development of the Congress Party; and he could, as you say, at that time have effected restrictions in the admission of Natives to the higher ranks of the service that at present are quite impossible.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1900.

3

LETTER FROM HAMILTON TO DADABHAI NAOROJI
6 December 1900

You advance various contentions, all of which seem to me to be based upon a curious misinterpretation of language or disregard of acknowledged and existing conditions. You announce yourself as a sincere supporter of British rule : you vehemently denounce the conditions and consequences which are inseparable from the maintenance of that rule.

The British Government have over and over again publicly laid down principle that when any Native of India is by character, ability, and knowledge qualified to perform administrative and other functions he shall not be disqualified merely by his religion or race.... That policy has been continuously followed and expanded : the number of Europeans has been diminished, and the number of Native largely increased....

The law of sedition in India is same as the law of sedition in this country and milder in its definition and application than those of any of the great Governments of Europe. You seem to think that a free press means that pressmen are free from the restraint of the ordinary law of the land, and at liberty through their newspapers to advocate assassination, outrage and racial disturbance and riot. For these offences alone have prosecutions been instituted. You speak of the increasing impoverishment of India, and of the annual drain upon her as steadily and continuously exhausting her resources. Again I assert that, you are under a delusion.

'...I readily admit there may be flaws in our system, and that in various branches of legislation, administration and research, improvements and innovations may be instituted of value and advantage. But I attach even more importance to promoting cordial and sympathetic relations between Europeans and Natives, between governors and governed, wholesale denunciations of British rule, crude allegations of violation of faith, charges of robbery and spoilation; attempts to associate periodic visitations of pestilence and famine, the system of land assessment in India—these and similar indictments can but widen and aggravate existing differences.

Parliament and the people of the country are profoundly anxious to do their duty towards India, but they are justly proud of the Government and the services they have in India established. Their sympathies are alienated and good intentions arrested by these unjust and exaggerated attacks upon their countrymen in India who are carrying out duties and functions of unprecedented responsibility and magnitude.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1900.

4

LETTERS FROM HAMILTON TO CURZON

I

31 January 1901

Northcote still wishes, in spite of hints to the contrary, to appoint to the vacancy in the Bombay High Court the Native barrister who is now acting in that capacity, but who was President of the Congress at Lahore. I understand that he got the acting appointment before that meeting, and, though holding a judicial appointment, he attended and delivered his address.... This seems to me to disqualify him to permanently hold judicial office; but Northcote strongly advocates his case, declaring that he is a reasonable and moderate man, that his appointment as President was much resented by the disloyal party of the Congress, and that he would be of great use to him in the extreme section. I should like to know what your views are on the subject. I much dislike promoting the leading political agitators to judicial appointments, even although they may have held aloof from extreme tactics. There may, however, be local divisions amongst the Congress party in Bombay, which renders it desirable that we should favour the more moderate section of that party as against the more violent. But unless some good and strong reason, which has not yet been produced, can be urged on behalf of this gentleman, I should be disposed to appoint some one else.

II

15 March 1901

The statement you sent me about Mr. Chandavarkar induces me to accept his nomination for the High Court. He is the second President of the National Congress whom I have appointed to High Court in Bombay. I own I do not like it but, under the circumstances you narrate, passing over him might do more harm than good. He is very well spoken of by all who know him personally.

Source : Hamilton Papers : Private Correspondence, 1901.

5

LETTER FROM HAMILTON TO CURZON
7 November 1901

To send in advance a deputation from India, and especially a deputation entirely composed of Mahommedans, seems to me very questionable. As a matter of policy, I do not like any procedure which brings home to Northern India the fact that the Amir is, to use the title of his father, a 'King of Islam'. When the tribal outbreaks occurred in 1897, I made special enquiries, both from 'Politicals' as well as soldiers who had been on the frontier, as to what in their judgement the effect would have been if the Amir had then declared 'Jehad' against us, and placed himself at its head. They all agreed that the consequences might have been most serious, and they had grave doubts as to what the attitude of many of our Mahommedan subjects, independent of the tribesmen outside our administrative boundary, would have been. The despatch of this deputation brings home to our Mahommedan notables who compose it that there is a bond of union of the most sacred character between them, Habibulla and his people, which does not exist between them and the Government to which they owe allegiance. Moreover, I should be doubtful as to the effect which a deputation of this religious character would have upon the Sikhs and Hindus. It seems to me to be our policy, so far as our own subjects are concerned, to balance one religious sect against another; but to specially select, on behalf of the Indian Government, a deputation exclusively composed of one creed to visit a foreign potentate, whose religious beliefs are the same as those of the deputation visiting him, seems to me to be an innovation in our Afghan policy. You have given so much study to this question, and your arrangements were so far advanced for sending the deputation that I did not like to do more than to express my misgivings as to its result.

Source : Hamilton Papers : Private Correspondence, 1901.

6

LETTER FROM B. M. MALABARI TO CURZON
19 July 1902

The hint given by the *Times* is very disquieting. It would be a pity if Your Excellency had to leave within the statutory period. An early departure would be the signal for a reaction in several directions. This could not, of course, obliterate the traces of the progress already made; but it must arrest development. Few of your larger reform measures have reached the practical stage and it would be a grief to many, and a very serious loss to the country, if Your Excellency were to go before the crowning of your Indian career.

CURZON'S REPLY
23 July 1902

You need be under no apprehension. I have not the least intention (if my health holds out) of leaving India before my work is done—or, since work is never done, at least established. No offer in the world would tempt me away from that which I regard as a solemn duty.

Sometimes one gets a little disheartened. People expect too much, or more often they know too little. The Indian (*i. e.* Native) Press, with one notable exception, with which you are perhaps familiar, is very impulsive, because very ignorant in its criticism. To a man who is working his whole soul out, according to his lights, in a particular cause, this is sometimes vexatious and discouraging. I console myself by thinking that I have some staunch friends like yourself and by remembering that it is one of the privileges of whole-hearted labour to wait for its recognition.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, July-December 1902.

7

LETTER FROM HAMILTON TO CURZON
6 January 1903

I wish I had, so far as India and British rule are concerned, your belief in the future : the longer I am here, the more pessimistic I become as regards,

not the immediate, but the far future : there are forces at work, such as Education, a free Press, selection by competitive examination for public service, civil courts, and the increasing power of the money-lenders, which are undermining and reserving the old order of things upon which our rule rests, and substituting a shifting and unstable quagmire of sham Radicalism and anti-English feeling such as can support no great system of alien and autocratic Government. If anything could avert the growth of these pernicious sentiments, it is a great Imperial celebration such as you have consummated : all the more honour and glory to you for its triumphal success.

Source : Hamilton Papers : Correspondence with the Viceroy, 1903.

8

LETTER FROM LORD AMPTHILL TO CURZON
27 April 1903

I know that my remarks would provoke much wrath, but I felt it a duty to make them, as I am strongly impressed with the harm that the Press is doing in India. The strong meat and drink, which suits the European would be death to the Indian and it seems to me that the present aping of British party journalism is in a similar manner doing untold harm to India. Here, when there are not two more or less evenly balanced political parties and two counter-balancing political creeds, it is like a poison without an anti-dote.

About the Congress which was going to hold its annual Session at Madras he wrote :

'I presume that if the organizers of the meeting ask for such facilities as Government can give, in the way of assistance for their proposed Exhibition, access to Public institutions and buildings, &c. &c. we should be doing right to help them at the best of our ability or that if they were to ask me personally for the loan of tents or anything of the kind that I can bestow, I should equally do right to assist them. But ought I to entertain them ? Ought I to attend any great social gathering which they might organize ? Ought I to make them a speech in any conceiveable circumstances ? Ought I to lend them the Banqueting Hall, which is part of Government House, and which is sometimes lent for public gatherings of a non-political or non-sectarian character, if they ask for it ? Most probably I shall be approached before long with requests designed to ascertain what attitude I intend to adopt towards the Congress, and I should be glad to know what you think right, proper, and politic, and what attitude you have laid down for the

Government of India to adopt towards this political organization. This is clearly a matter in which the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors ought to preserve absolute uniformity of opinion and action, and it is for you to decide what it should be.'

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1903.

9

LETTER FROM CURZON TO J. A. BOURDILLON, ACTING LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
15 June 1903

Before long the Government of India will probably address you upon a readjustment of the boundaries of Bengal. Chittagong of course must go to Assam. But we shall probably propose much wider schemes : and in that case I hope that they may be temperately considered, and viewed, not from the narrow stand-point of local or sentimental propossessions, but with a statesman-like outlook upon the future. With nearly 80 millions of people the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is hopelessly and unpardonably over weighted.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1903.

10

LETTER FROM LORD CURZON TO LORD AMPTHILL, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS
15 June 1903

I do not think that I feel quite as badly as you do about the Native Press in India, although I have perhaps cause to feel even worse, seeing that the Native papers of Bengal, among which I constantly reside, and which devote columns to me every day, are incomparably more unjust and scurrilous than those of Madras ... My reasons are that, though these papers cannot be ignored, since they form the opinions of a large and growing class

of the community, yet they do not represent the views of the better class of educated Natives who deplore and despise them ...

About Congress I can give you a quite unequivocal reply, since I have pursued a definite policy in this respect without deviation since I came to India.... My view of the Congress is that it is a movement with which neither Government nor Government servants, and if so, much less the heads of Government, should feel or show any sympathy. In so far as it is innocent, it is superflous : and in so far as it is hostile to Government or seditious, it is a national danger. My policy ever since I came to India has been to reduce the Congress to impotence, (*a*) by never taking any notice of it, (*b*) by carrying out such reasonable reforms as to deprive it of reasonable ground of complaint, (*c*) by showing such sympathy with, and tolerance towards, the Natives as to give no excuse to the Congress to revive racial issues, but (*d*) by never in the smallest degree truckling to its leaders or holding any communion with the unclean thing. Over and over again has the Congress, through its spokesmen, made overtures to me : which I have invariably met with the same polite but frigid indifference.... From these remarks you will clearly gather, in reply to your specific questions that (1) I would not, if I were you, lend tents or show unnecessary civility in any form to the Congress at Madras, (2) I should consider it most unfortunate, if you were to lend them the Banqueting Hall (in the shadow of Government House), or give them a garden party or entertain them in any way, (3) I would not recommend you to attend any social gathering given in their honour, or by them, or to address a speech to them in any capacity.

In the early days of the Congress public men committed the grievous error of putting it on the back. Lord Dufferin led the way in this track of feeble and stupid opportunism. He gave a big garden party to the Congress at Calcutta, and thought that he would thereby draw the teeth of the Opposition. They despised him for it.... Since then we have grown wiser and it would be a *public misfortune* if we now went back again. Of course I should not raise the smallest objection to any officer of Government slipping into the Congress pavilion as spectator. A certain number always do. But if he appeared on the platform or made a speech, I should require an explanation pretty sharp.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1903.

11

LETTER FROM LORD AMPTHILL TO CURZON
26 December 1903

The Congress-wallahs have thus far not troubled me, but a request for the loan of tents made by the Exhibition Committee aroused my suspicions, and I made quite sure that they were not to be used for lodging Congressmen before I lent them. It took me three weeks and much correspondence before I could get a definite assurance on this point. I think that we have successfully prevented any of the Exhibition moneys going into the Congress coffers by the stringent conditions which we imposed on our grant-in-aid of the Exhibition.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1903.

12

LETTER FROM CURZON TO JOHN BRODRICK
31 December 1903

Here in Bengal the parallel question of territorial redistribution has involved us, as you may see from the Calcutta newspapers, in a turmoil which is mainly of an artificial description. It has far long even recognised that Bengal is far too big for the charge of any single man, and proposals to reduce the burden have been made, some successfully, the majority unsuccessfully, at different periods during the last quarter of a century. We recently framed a plan, which you have probably seen, for reducing its size by material additions to the neighbouring territories of the Central Provinces and Assam. At once a prodigious outcry is raised by all the parties whom it is proposed to take away from Bengal, that they are being torn from the bosom of their ancestral mother, and that the act of spoliation is both a blunder and a crime. Dacca and Mymensingh, which it was proposed to incorporate with Assam, are rending the air with piteous outcries. Ampthill writes to me that he is going to struggle vigorously against any surrender of anything in Madras. Chhota Nagpur is holding meetings to say that it is not willing to go to the Central Province. All these objections will of course have to be carefully considered before we make up our minds and report the case to you. So far, in the hundreds of articles and letters—that I have read upon the subject, at any rate of the partition of Eastern Bengal, I have not found one single line of

argument, there is nothing but rhetoric and declamation; and one almost begins to weary of attempting anything in the nature of a positive administrative reform in a country where so few people will ever look ahead, where public opinion is unstable and ill-informed, and where sentiment overrides almost other consideration.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1903.

13

LETTER FROM LORD AMPTHILL, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS TO CURZON

9 January 1904

The Congress was a great failure, and it is a question whether the President's speech or the cyclonic storm administered the greatest douche of cold water to the assembled delegates. The ranking re-iteration of oft refuted falsehoods by Lal Mohan Ghose disgusted most of the moderate men, and they did not mind saying so. None of the Congress-Wallahs from other Provinces asked to see me or came near me, and they all seem to have cleared out as soon as the 'tamasha' was over.

CURZON'S REPLY

The Congress meeting seems to have been a sufficiently miserable affairs. The speech of the President showed that these ancient agitators are untaught and unteachable. Never was such a stale re-hash of belated cries and obsolete platitude.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1904.

14

LETTER FROM BRODRICK TO CURZON
28 January 1904

'...the *prodigious agitation* that has been raised in Bengal about the proposed severance of Decca and Mymensingh appears to me to be almost exclusively based on sentiment and declamation and amid the hundreds of pages of print that I have read upon the matter denouncing the Government in the most unmeasured terms, I have scarcely come across more than two or three propositions which are capable of being called arguments at all. The fact in any case remains that Bengal is far too big a charge for any individual man, while the experiment to which the public, wholly ignorant of the secrets of administration, is apparently inclined, namely, the substitution for a Lieutenant-Governor or a Governor with a Council as at Bombay and Madras, is one which I should myself be most reluctant to put forward, because I do not believe that it would be a remedy at all. Government by one man is infinitely better than government by three men, if it can be so managed. What we want in India is personal knowledge of localities and personal touch with the people. This can only be gained by the familiarity of the head of the Administration with the places and people under his charge. With a triumvirate as a ruling power this is quite impossible, and Bombay and Madras are both in my view, illustrations that the weak points are in excess of the merits of the system.'

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904.

15

LETTER FROM CURZON TO JOHN BRODRICK
17 February 1904

Indeed I think that it is likely to take the line that you indicate—which is indeed exactly what we have in mind, *viz.*, the cutting up of Bengal—rather than any more contracted form. Bengal is an impossible task for any one man, and one has only to go to the districts to realise what tenuity of administration means. The Bengalis, who like to think themselves a nation, and who dream of a future when the English will have been turned out, and a Bengali Babu will be installed in Government-House, Calcutta, of course bitterly

resent any disruption that will be likely to interfere with the realisation of this dream. If we are weak enough to yield to their clamour now, we shall not be able to dismember or reduce Bengal again; and you will be cementing and solidifying, on the eastern flank of India, a force already formidable, and certain to be a source of increasing trouble in the future. Nearly every experienced Bengal administrator whom I have met, or whose words I have read, is in favour of the change; and the agitation against it in the country is being fomented by the most transparently dishonest means. It is quite likely that our proposals may have to be modified in other direction.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904.

16

LETTER FROM CURZON TO BRODRICK

23 February 1904

I have had a very busy week since I last wrote, including some half a dozen speeches. In two of them I explained and defended the proposed partition of Bengal, and answered the ignorant and prejudiced criticisms that have been levelled against it. The Press, both European and Native, which has been generally hostile—for obvious reasons in both cases—appears to be 'Struck all of a heap', and had no idea what to reply. I have little doubt from all that I have seen and heard in the regions affected that the project must be expanded somewhat, so as to carve a new province out of Eastern Bengal to which Assam will be appended. I found the agitation got up by the Native party to rest in the main upon the grossest misrepresentation. Hundreds of poor ignorant natives had been paid to hold up placards with English inscriptions printed on them in Calcutta and sent up by the gross before my arrival. On the other hand, I found the case for a complete reform in the present system of administration, stronger even more than I anticipated. In the whole of Mymensingh, with 40,00,000 of people, there is only one British Executive Officer. Further, the Bengal Officers who are sent to these parts strike me as an inferior lot. They dislike the part of the country, and the work suffers.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904.

17

LETTER FROM CURZON TO SIR A. H. L. FRASER LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

8 April 1904

'I have read through your letter on the Partition question. I have one petty and one considerable criticism to pass upon it.

'The petty one is that while in one place (para 31) you speak, in a marginal note, correctly of the *enlarged* proposals of the Government of India, you elsewhere, and even in the same paragraph, consistently describe them as the *modified* scheme of the Government of India. Surely this is incorrect. Modification means change in the direction of curtailment or reduction; while the proposed change is entirely in the opposite direction....

'...While laying great stress on the necessity of relieving Bengal, it yet leaves the population of the reconstituted province at 6,66,74,824, whereas we left it at 6,75,00,000. This will never do. If we are to have new Lieutenant-Governorship, we must constitute it with more than 2,18,00,000 people, or at least we must relieve the old one to the extent of more than 12 millions. Your scheme, therefore, does not appear to me to possess the merit of finality. It will have to be altered in one or two directions. Either the whole of Orissa must be taken away from Bengal and given to the Central Provinces (*i.e.*, if you are to retain Chhota Nagpur), or you must add more than the Chittagong and Dacca Divisions to the new province, *i.e.* you must include some portion (what I cannot say) of the Districts of Pabna, Bogra, and Rangpur, which you have excluded in para 28.'

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1904.

18

LETTER FROM CURZON TO BRODRICK

21 February 1905

The administration of Bengal is bad, and it is bad because the work is far too great for any individual man, and because, therefore, there is complete lack of touch between the centre and the extremities. Secondly, no paltry re-adjustments can effect the necessary reform. Indeed, in a sense they would make it worse, because they would tend merely to reproduce the situation which already vitiates the administration of Assam, namely, the existence of a

small province having no service of its own, but drawing its men from its more powerful neighbour, which takes good care invariably to send it of its worst. Thirdly, the proposals we are submitting to you represent what I should take to be an almost unparallel unanimity of opinion among the officers consulted, though the matter is one that might well admit of most opposite views. Fourthly, the rival proposal of appointing a Governor or a Lieutenant-Governor, with an Executive Council, for Bengal is one which the whole of my colleagues as well as myself think would be fraught with grave injury to the future of the Province, and to which we should ourselves be unwilling in any circumstances to give our assent. Fifthly, the opposition to our scheme, though not without considerable force is the form in which the scheme was at first put forward, is now, in relation to our final plan, an outcry of the Congress party alone, inspired by political motives and directed to a political end. Calcutta is the centre from which the Congress party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal, and indeed the whole of India. Its best wire-pullers and its most frothy orators all reside here. The perfection of their machinery and the tyranny which it enables them to exercise, dominate public opinion in Calcutta. They affect the High Court; they frighten the Local Government and they are sometimes not without serious influence upon the Government of India. The whole of their activity is directed to creating an agency so powerful that they may one day be able to force a weak Government to give them what they desire. Any measure in consequence that would devide the Bengali-speaking population that would permit independent centres of activity and influence to grow up; that would dethrone Calcutta from its place as the centre of successful intrigue, or that would weaken the influence of the lawyer class, who have the entire organization in their hands, is intensely and hotly resented by them. The outcry will be very loud and very fierce, but as a Native gentlemen said to me, 'My countrymen always howl until a thing is settled; then they accept it.'

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with Secretary of State, 1904–05.

19

LETTER FROM CURZON TO SIR A. GODLEY
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA
16 March 1905

After a month of wire-pulling and manipulation, the Native meeting to denounce me came off in the Town Hall last Friday. I am now not unused

to these demonstrations. It is, I think, the seventh that has been held in the same building for a similar object in any time. This time, however, a special effort was put forward to eclipse all previous efforts. It was considered very important to impress the Liberal Party and the future Cabinet at home. Accordingly Mr. Gokhale was sent to Bombay to organize a meeting there. Another man was sent to Madras for a similar purpose. Similar demonstrations were to take simultaneously in other great centres of population. The impression was to be given of a great wave of indignation over-spreading the country and finding irrepressible and universal outlet Well, the Calcutta meeting came off, and I send you the Lieutenant-Governor's description of it. Not a man of work, in spite of the most tremendous pressure, would be persuaded to attend, and a platform of Congress editors, professional agitators, and noisy vakils confronted an audience of shouting schoolboys.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904–05.

20

LETTER FROM CURZON TO BRODRICK
23 March 1905

English newspapers take no notice of it because they despise it, the British officials take no notice of it because it is not their duty; the Viceroy himself can take no notice of it because it is beneath his dignity. And so all these petty volcanoes scream and screech from one year's end to the other and throw their torrents of mud into the air. One could afford to laugh were it not that the constant repetition of this sort of invective tends sooner or later to sway the minds of the educated classes and I doubt not in my own case that the impression exists among them, which men like Cotton and Wedderburn have done their best to propagate, that I, who is regarded in England as ultra-Indian, am in India, ultra-English, and am inspired by the most dangerous and reactionary designs.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904–05.

21

TELEGRAM FROM BRODRICK TO CURZON
20 May 1905

It has been strongly urged here that the best way of giving relief to the Lieutenant-Governor, which all admit is necessary, would be to place portions of Bengal, probably Chhota Nagpur and Orissa, under a Commissioner, having a position like that of the Commissioner in Sindh, and invested, as may seem necessary, with powers of a Lieutenant-Governor. It is urged that this scheme would greatly diminish the opposition by avoiding the separation of a mass of Bengalis from Calcutta, and while relieving the Lieutenant-Governor, would provide for the form of personal administration best suited for these districts. Please see Sir Denzil Ibbetson's Minute on the Berar question which was enclosed in your Despatch dated the 18th June 1903, at page 2, I observe there is no mention of any such scheme in the Despatch or enclosures, and I should be glad to know, as soon as possible, whether any proposal of this nature had been considered by you before your Despatch was written.

CURZON'S REPLY
24 May 1905

The proposal named by you was not seriously considered by us, because we deemed it absolutely impracticable. The position of Commissioner in Sindh, which is unlike any other Government in India, is only possible there because of the isolation of Sindh from Bombay and of its peculiar local conditions. It would be impossible in the case of an arbitrary area covered out of, and coterminous with, rest of province, and within easy reach of the capital. We did however consider and unhesitatingly rejected, the idea of placing Orissa and Chhota Nagpur under a Chief Commissioner, because it would fail to secure any one of the objects for which we recommend partition.

A Commissionership would be even worse—

(1) It would give a quite in appreciable and wholly inadequate relief to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

(2) By the merely nominal withdrawal of only 12 millions from Bengal it would leave the case for partition untouched and unsolved.

(3) It would preclude the expansion of Assam and would stereotype misfortune of its dependence upon foreign service, while if the Commissioner became Chief Commissioner, this anomaly would be duplicated and we would have two provinces manned from Bengal and receiving officers whom that province was least desirous to keep.

(4) It would tend to consolidate the Bengali element by detaching it from outside factors, and would produce the very effect that we desire to avoid. The best guarantee of the political advantage of our proposal is its dislike by the Congress Party.

(5) It would meet with the keen opposition the Lieutenant-Governor and of the Bengal Civil Service.

For all these reasons, in which Sir D. Ibbetson asks me to express his emphatic concurrence, we could not support such a proposal, you are surely also aware, in view of the agitation raised for exclusively political objects, over our scheme, that the prestige of the Government of India will be seriously weakened if it be rejected.

II

LETTER FROM SIR ARTHUR GODLEY TO CURZON
30 May 1905

'...the matter is now finally settled in favour of your proposal, on which I heartily congratulate you. This is a tremendously big thing that you have achieved.'

Again the Under-Secretary wrote :

'I congratulate you heartily on this result, you will now, I hope, open your umbrella and receive the dowopour of vituperation which will doubtless descend upon you : We, in this country, shall prepare for an undress debate and some criticism from the Liberal benches, inspired by the Congress-Wallahs.'

Source : Curzon Papers : Telegraphic Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1904–05.

22

LETTER FROM SIR A. H. L. FRASER TO CURZON
6 June 1905

I wonder how far the 'Partition' question has been advanced. The, longer the settlement is delayed the worse. An early settlement would tend to peace. The opposition is really engineered from Calcutta. And Calcutta has none but the most foolish interest in the matter. The ignorance of the rest of India, and the complete sympathy with the interests of the interior, that prevail in Calcutta, are very deplorable. Yet the views of Calcutta are forced on the people of the interior by a system of very effective coercion.

Source : Curzon Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1905.

23

LETTER FROM SIR H. S. BARNES TO CURZON
4 August 1905

I have had another fight this week about the telegram as to your proceeding with the formation of the new Eastern Bengal Province. It was actually proposed to issue a telegram stopping your proceeding until permanent buildings were constructed at Dacca. I protested in Council. I asked who was to build the building unless the Province was first constituted, and a Lieutenant-Governor appointed, clearly Bengal wouldn't and Assam couldn't. The Members of the Committee who framed the telegram actually contemplated the whole thing being hung up for one or two years till a new station with Lieutenant Governor's house and permanent offices, were constructed at Dacca—a splendid opening to the Bengalis to continue their agitation. Ultimately the telegram went as since received by you asking for some assurances, as to the temporary arrangements made for officers' accommodation. I said even this was unnecessary and that we ought to trust the Government of India to carry out their own proposals with due regard to the public convenience.

REPLY FROM CURZON TO BARNES
15 August 1905

What a loyal and faithful friend you are.

As regards the partition of Bengal, Fraser wrote to me yesterday to say that all postponement or modification would be 'unspeakably deplorable'. All is going very well. The agitation is fizzling out and was never formidable.

Source : Curzon Papers ; Correspondence from people in England, 1904-05.

24

LETTER FROM BRODRICK TO CURZON

7 October 1905

There is a strong feeling in this country that in a question which is causing so much feeling in India, the grounds of our action should be more fully set forth than was possible in the Resolution of the Government of India. If we do not meet this view, I fear opposition here will take up the question from a party stand-point.

...In order to avoid the appearance of haste which is being much commented on here; I hope you will allow a clear three weeks to elapse between the publication of the papers and the final steps consummating partition.

Source : Curzon Papers : Telegraphic Correspondence with the Secretary of State for India, 1904–05.

25

A PROCLAMATION IN THE GAYA DISTRICT FOR THE GUIDANCE OF MAHOMMEDANS ON SWADESHI MOVEMENT

Well, brother Mahommedans, be on your guard, do not be deceived into becoming participators in these meetings.

The partition of Bengal, besides having, according to Government, many administrative advantages, confers many benefits on the Mussulman community on condition that we remain aloof from all these silly and disloyal acts...and continue to remain loyal and faithful to the laws and wishes of our August Sovereign the King-Emperor Edward VII.... We Mussulmans should shun all such meetings which are disloyal and ungrateful to our Gracious King-Emperor, and we should never, never under any form or condition, become participators therein. At this juncture Mahommedans are being greatly deceived. Weigh well, reflect, use your common sense, and save yourselves from being tempted into snares. Do not spoil your long tested loyalty by any rash act.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 November 1905.

28

LETTERS FROM MOULVI SYED ERFAN ALI, SECRETARY, BIRBHUM ANJAMAN-I-ISLAMIA, BENGAL, TO THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

I
7 August 1905

I crave that you will be courteous enough to bring to His Excellency the Viceroy's notice the following facts with respect to the recent agitation regarding the partition of Bengal. It is true that this far reaching and wise policy has been received by the Hindus with a considerable amount of discontent. The Mahommedan community have however recognised the sagacity and wisdom of His Excellency—they recognise the enormous benefit which is likely to be derived by a fusion of races in Bengal both on Ethnological and Geographical grounds they recognise that the partition is calculated ultimately to bring about the largest amount of benefit to anglomeration of races at present thrown together in confusion. They recognise the statesman like wisdom of His Excellency and propose to hold a mass meeting to give effect to their loyal views and their complete acquiescence with His Excellency's great and benevolent intentions for the advancement of India.

Under these circumstances I, on behalf of my influential association, beg with all possible submission and respect, to congratulate His Excellency on the fruition of his gracious and noble plans.

II
19 August 1905

I have the honour to inform you that as to the recent agitation regarding the partition of Bengal I have in my letter No. 178 dated the 7th instant, given the view of my Association and crave now that you will be courteous enough to bring to His Excellency's notice the facts and be kind enough to let me know His Excellency's view on my proposal for taking a prompt step of these seditious vernacular notices published by the Hindu Secretary for reviving a great agitation, nay a mutiny inviting the people in general, Bengal, specially the most influential community—the Mahommedans of Bengal. But I, as connected with the most prominent Mahommedan Houses of Bengal and Bihar as well as the most influential Mahommedan Associations of this Province, am bold enough to take a serious step against the joining of a single Mahommedan to this injurious and seditious (sic) proposed against the views of our benign British Government, specially the sagacious benevolent Governor like Lord Curzon.

I beg to send herewith the seditious notices circulated in the province by the Hindus and beg most earnestly to have the permission for taking prompt step to keep aloof the Mahommedan community from this seditious affair and make them to stand in the position they are, a loyal subject to the British Crown.

Source : Government of India, Home Department Public (B), July 1906, Nos. 228-31.

29

CIRCULAR OF THE MAHOMMEDAN LITERARY SOCIETY OF CALCUTTA REGARDING SWADESHI MOVEMENT

It has recently been brought to the notice of the Mahommedan Literary Society of Calcutta that there exists some doubt in the minds of some Mahommedans as to what attitude they should adopt in respect of the policy of Government in connection with the partition of Bengal and also in respect of the political meetings held under the name of 'Swadeshi'.

We have therefore the honour to point out for the guidance and information of such Mahommedan who are in doubt, that the policy of Government in effecting the partition of Bengal, besides insuring numerous general administrative advantages is calculated to confer a great boon upon the Mahommedan community at large, and it is, in the opinion of the Committee of the Mahommedan Literary Society of Calcutta, incumbent upon every true and loyal Mahommedan faithfully to support the policy of Government in every possible way in his power.

We would also venture to suggest that all true and loyal Mahommedan subjects of His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII, in the interest of peace and order and for the protection of the sacred Mahommedan interests, which are distinct from those of any other communities, should strictly abstain from joining any political meeting or demonstration whatsoever, in connection with the partition of Bengal....

It may, however, be noted that there is nothing in the laws to prevent any Mahommedan from buying or selling country made articles or using the same as he pleases.

All true and loyal Mahommedan subjects of the King-Emperor are accordingly requested to exert their best influence over their less advanced and ignorant Mahommedan neighbours and friends through the medium of religious heads, Imams, Mullahs and other influential Mahommedans of every

town and hamlet to abstain from joining any political agitation or movement against our benign Government to whom the Mahommedan community are eternally grateful for numerous and manifold benefits conferred upon them, from time to time....

Source : The Pioneer, 16 November 1905.

30

LETTER FROM J.B. FULLER TO LORD MINTO
26 November 1905

There are some influential men among them...they are, practically unrepresented in the Native Press. The landlords are mostly Hindus, and are bringing great pressure to bear upon their Mussulman ryots. Still, the preponderance of Mussulmans is a reassuring feature in the situation, we have to be careful not to commit ourselves entirely to Mussulman interests, or to act in any way which would encourage Mussulman ryots to rise against their Hindu Landlords.

They have in some places been greatly irritated by the interference of Swadeshi agitators, and impertinent school boys. It is unfortunately the case that Mussulmans are very scantly represented in the public service. The superior officers of the police, in particular, are almost wholly Hindus. This increases our difficulty.

The attitude of the common people is generally reassuring. The Mussulmans are glad to see me wherever I go. The Hindus rarely acknowledge me when they first see me; but I have noticed that on my second or third visit to the town their manner became more cordial.

At the time of Partition the condition was poor and the leading Mussulmans definitely asked me for protection against insult and annoyance.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1905–06.

31

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
13 December 1905

The partition of Bengal was decided upon before I came to India and was the result of long deliberations and detailed inquiry during Curzon's term of office. The opinion of the official would here is unanimous in approving of what has been done and in accepting it as the only possible solution of the undoubted difficulties of the position, whilst one is told from the same sources that the present agitation is really not due to any genuine national feeling in Indian, but that it has been brought about largely by the loss of a certain amount of business, especially legal business, which will migrate from Calcutta to the large cities of Eastern Bengal, and that this feeling has been fanned into a blaze by wire-pullers of Calcutta under the influence of other wire-pullers at home connected with the National Congress, and that every attempt is being made to keep bad feeling alive in the view of a reversal of the Partition Legislation after a discussion in Parliament. The Native Press, on the other hand, has been violent and, in some cases, seditious, asserting generally that the partition has been carried out regardless of Bengal national sentiment and local feeling, and that it has been aimed to a great extent at the Swadeshi movement representing the local industries which the Government is accused of hoping to destroy, and which there has been an attempt to protect by the boycott of British goods. There is no doubt a great deal of truth in the assertion that the agitation has been unscrupulously fostered, and that influence has been brought to bear on the student class and the Universities to join in the movement. But at the same time I cannot but think there is much more genuine feeling in the movement than the official mind is prepared to admit...but I cannot help suspecting that local feeling has been treated with some want of sympathy in aiming at what in the official mind is considered necessary for administrative machinery.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

32

LETTERS FROM MINTO TO MORLEY

I

20 December 1905

I have had a good many conversations with Native gentlemen in regard to the Partition of Bengal.... The Mahommedans who largely preponderate

in Eastern Bengal appear to be generally satisfied with what has occurred.... But putting the Mahommedan aside I should say that the opinion is decidedly that there has been a want of consideration for local sentiment, that people have not been consulted who ought to have been consulted. Also that partition might have been affected with much greater regard to Bengali sentiment in instead of the sacrifice of a part of the Eastern Provinces, Bihar and Orissa had been handed over respectively to the United and Central Province.... I yesterday had an interview with Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji and Mr. A. Chowdhry, who are both pronounced leaders against Partition, and they assured me that it was not partition they objected to, that they recognised the necessity of some partition, that in the direction of Bihar and Orissa they would be quite prepared to agree to it, but what they did object to had been the tone of Curzon's speeches and the want of inquiring from those who would be affected by the change.... Still I cannot but think that, though no doubt this agitation is setting down and will eventually disappear, a feeling of soreness will remain, and that we have been committed to a some what unfortunate piece of legislation.

II
5 February 1906

I see I have made no allusion to the Mahommedan population of Bengal, the fact being that it is only the Hindu population which have taken an active part in the movement, and which constitutes the political voice of the province.... A great source of ill-feeling was the retention at Barisal of the Gorkha Police for a considerable time with a view to keeping order. On the 15th December I telegraphed to the Lieutenant-Governor suggesting that the Gorkhas should be withdrawn, if possible, and this was done and I hope had a good effect.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

33

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
29 March 1906

Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor, though is pleasant men to talk to, does not at all impress me as likely to take a level-headed course of action, and there has been very stupid mismanagement there lately. I have had a good deal of correspondence with him, and I think I told you some time ago that by my instructions the police were withdrawn as far as possible.... At the same

time from start to finish the thing has been badly managed and I have not been at all pleased with what I have gathered of Fuller's doing.'

Minto again wrote to Morley :

I am thoroughly dissatisfied with Fuller, and yet he has done nothing for which one could possibly be justified in removing him.... I sincerely wish Fuller could migrate to some other sphere of activity, and I shall not feel happy as long as he remains where he is. But there is nowhere to send him to. The only thing I can think of for him, and I hope you won't think me unkind, is a place on your own Council at home, where he can be kept in order.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

34

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
19 April 1906

What you say of Fuller's doing is rather disquieting. The anti-Partition people here are pretty sure to reopen the case in the House of Commons before long and of course they are kept well informed from India (with a few lies thrown in, I dare say), and if Fuller by excess or folly is making a substance for their case, he should be removed. A subordinate who won't take his cue from responsible superiors, is a nuisance. If, as you say, the whole thing has been badly managed from start to finish, then the antipartitions are not wholly in the wrong. Do help me (by papers, reports &c— I don't mean to trouble you for letters) as fully informed as you can as to the working of Partition in all its aspects.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

35

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO
19 April 1906

The anti-partition people here are pretty sure to reopen the case in the House of Commons before long, and of course they are kept well-informed

from India.... Do keep me as fully informed as you can as to the working for partition in all its aspect.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905–06.

36

LETTERS FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

I
25 April 1906

I am rather perplexed about the Barisal affair, and also as to the high-handed proceedings as to Banerji. Prima facie they strike me as all wrong.... The British Raj must be a poor, sorry affair, if it trembles before a pack of unruly collegians.

II
3 May 1906

I have now looked pretty carefully into the doing at Barisal.... More and more do I feel how painfully right you were when you said the whole business had been badly handled 'from start to finish', and the temperament of Fuller is really a misfortune that draws the original blunders. Sir C. Lyall of this office is a staunch friend and ardent baker of Fuller; and yet every word he uses shows that Fuller is exactly the man worst fitted for such a post : 'impetuous', 'speaks before he thinks', 'extremely sensitive to marks of unpopularity', and so on. Fraser, while perfectly loyal to comradeship, admits that the task at Dacca required patience, coolness, and a light hand, and he could not deny that Fuller was hardly marked out for a task of that sort.

Your people have not supplied me with very full papers about the doings at Barisal, &c. and I wish they would remember that it needs some skill on my part to steer through the Anglo-Indians in the House of Commons and in the press, and it is impossible for me to keep my head above water unless I am in possession of full, prompt and regular papers.

Just look at the punishment of between three and four hundred school-boys by 'absolute exclusion from Government service'—when it appears in three distinct places in the 'annexures' that the boys were led and instigated by their teachers. On this point I venture to make a suggestion to you. Why not at once order (as of your own grace and clemency) the immediate reinstatement of these lads ? You could do this without disparagement of

Fuller's authority. Partition is a disagreeable pill. Well, that is all the more reason why we should take every chance of gilding it. Fuller and his like seem to think that the best plan is to gild the pill with warm word.

...I still cherish a lively hope that by and by some means may be found of removing him to a post more sympathetic to him. If the agitation subsides so be it. If not, I must say frankly that it will be impossible for me to carry both Partition and Fuller on my back. All these high-handed proceedings are simply playing the game of the enemies and critics of British Government in India.

Source to Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905-06.

37

A MANIFESTO OF A MAHOMMEDAN RESIDENT OF SHILLONG ON THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

The formation of the new province is resulting and will further result in the improvement of the Mussulmans. It has already proved an incentive in the cause of English education. The other communities will no doubt derive better advantages than they would have obtained had the old arrangement been maintained. The West Bengal Hindu gentlemen were holding the monopoly of service trade, commerce, profession and education in old Bengal. It is for these reasons that there is so much agitation against the partition of Bengal. The monopoly has been broken down, and they have, no doubt, understood that by the formation of the new province there will be a decided rapid development of trade, commerce, education and means of communication in the areas transferred, and that the Mahommedans might prosper, a thing which they look with disfavour.

As there are anti-partition meetings here and there, it is indispensably necessary for the native of the province, Mussulmans and Hindus, to guard their own interest from the claws of West Bengal, and to hold pro-partition meetings and to send up proceeding to Government. As the matter seriously affects the interests of the Mussulmans, it is hoped that in every town and village the Mussulmans will unite together and send up their views to Government, pointing out the advantages of the new province, and asking to maintain the province as now constituted. By the formation of the new province Dacca will regain its lost grandeur, Chittagong will thrive and form one of the important ports on the Indian Ocean. Railway communication will improve. There will be good colleges at Dacca and elsewhere. The natives of the province will have a better and fairer share in the public service. We want a proportionate distribution of justice to the representations of all

classes and creeds. The Mussulmans are to regain their lost grounds. On account of certain circumstances over which they had no control they had the misfortune to remain backward so long, and as the time has now come to rise up and to stand side by side with other communities, it is only necessary that there should be united efforts in all directions with due sense of loyalty to the British Throne. The British Throne has under it a large number of Mussulmans than in any other Empire, and as the Indian Mussulmans are the most loyal subjects of His Majesty, it can well be hoped that the united, honest and loyal efforts in the right direction will bring in decided improvements in their material condition.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 June 1906.

38

TEXT OF THE LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF DIVISIONS AND DISTRICT JUDGES BY HIS HONOUR SIR B. FULLER'S GOVERNMENT

The attached table (appendix A)[1] contrast the share of ministerial posts held by Mahommedans in each district of Eastern Bengal with the proportion they constitute of the population. It indicates that while the Mahommedans form two-thirds of the population they hold less than one-sixth of the appointments referred to and that while in strict proportion to population they were entitled to 2741 appointments, they actually hold only 647. Their position in this respect varies a good deal from district to district, but is lowest in the important districts of the Dacca Division, and it is only in the small district of Bogra, where the Mahommedans out number the Hindus by nearly five to one, that they have succeeded in securing even one-third of the post-available. Elsewhere the proportion only rises above one-fifth in the districts of Chittagong and Raj Shahi, where the Mahommedans form three-fourths or more of the population.

I am desired accordingly to invite your opinion as to the practical steps which are best-adopted to redress the balance of patronage in divisional and district offices. It is not intended that Mahommedans should be admitted to the public service, when their educational qualifications fall short of the standards that have already been fixed, for admission to that service. But it seems advisable to fix a proportion which Mahommedans should constitute in the personnel of each office, and to instruct those who have the power to appoint ministerial officers that, until that proportion has been reached,

[1] The Appendix has not been produced.

they should not reject a Mahommedan candidate, if qualified, in favour of a Hindu candidate merely because the latter has superior qualifications. This would follow a precedent that has already been set in the matter of the appointment of Sub-inspectors of Schools, and would appear to be the only means of securing to the Mahommedan community its fair share of subordinate Government posts. I am to enquire what proportions should in your opinion be adopted in the Magisterial and Collectorate offices. It would obviously be impossible to insist on the present upon a proportion which would even approximate to be percentage of the population represented by the Mahommedans; and the highest proportion which could be adopted which seem to be one-third at the outside. Further, I am to ask what share of new appointments should be reserved for Mahommedans, if qualified, so long as they hold less than the standard proportions of the posts. It would seem desirable that a paragraph should be added to the miscellaneous annual reports of the Collectors and the Commissioners stating the number of such ministerial appointments made during the year and the number given to the Hindus and Mahommedans respectively. I am to ask for your suggestion as to the most practical way in which the object of the Government may be secured in this matter without too great an addition to the number of length of existing reports and returns.

Source : The Pioneer, 29 June 1906.

39

MAHOMMEDAN FEELINGS AT THE RESIGNATION OF SIR B. FULLER

A mass meeting, which was attended by 30,000 persons, was held to-day at Shahbagh, Dacca, to protest against the weak policy of Government in accepting the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, and to express their profound sorrow at the departure of such a popular administrator. The meeting was presided over by the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur Khawja Salimolla, C. S. I., and was attended by the chief resident and representatives from all parts of the Province. Only one resolution was passed; it ran as follows :

'That the Mahommedan community of Eastern Bengal and Assam in meeting assembled deeply deplore the resignation of Sir Bompfylde Fuller, who was a just, sagacious and sympathetic administrator, and regret to think that Government, by accepting it without any regard for Mahommedan interests, has done a great injustice to His Majesty's loyal Mahommedan

subjects, who form two-thirds of the population of this Province, and have never joint or been in sympathy with the Hindu agitators, as is often misrepresented by a section of the Press and some members of Parliament, who unwarrantably take upon themselves to speak on behalf of the millions of the Mussulmans of the new Province; and beg to record their disapproval of a system of government which maintains no continuity of policy, and which they feel, by lowering the prestige of British power in this country, is bound materially to affect both the efficiency and popularity of the administration, and to alienate the sympathy of a numerically important and loyal section of His Majesty's subjects in India.'

The Chairman in the course of his speech said :

'We are gathered here this evening under the shadows of a great and a national calamity. I believe I echo the feeling of all those present here when I say that the sudden and untimely resignation of our noble-minded, kind hearted, and most beloved Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, cannot be viewed in any other light by the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Sir Bampfylde Fuller was one of the most popular kind-hearted and sympathetic administrators we ever had in this part of the country at any rate. As any inhabitant of Eastern Bengal will tell you the man on the spot ought to be trusted, and not the writing of those who are far far away from this province, and to whom only the zest and excitement of going against the Government policy supplies materials for leaders and leadereties. Sir Bampfylde Fuller's goodness did not degenerate into weakness and took away withal nothing from his strength of character, a trait essential in a ruler. The Mahommedans, there can be no denying the fact, never received at the hand of Government that amount of attention to which they were entitled, and it was the Government of Sir Bampfylde Fuller which for the First time did justice to this backward community. He was sympathetic and protected the weak against the strong. Under these circumstances we cannot but greatly disapprove the policy of Government in giving in to the agitators by accepting the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller. Some consideration ought to have been made for the 18 millions of His Majesty's loyal devoted and peaceful Mahommedan subjects who with one accord upheld the partition of Bengal and the policy of the Government. I am very sorry to have to say that such a weak policy really lowers the prestige of the British power in India.'

Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury said :

'The vast gathering before which I have the privilege to stand and address is indicative of a national awakening among us, a community which was hitherto contended to lie under the heels of the Hindu dominancy. The Mahommedans form two-thirds of the entire population of the new Province but I doubt whether they have wielded or as you wield one-hundredth part of the influence which our fellow countrymen the Hindus hold as represented in the various branches of the public service. The influence of the Hindus may be due

to some extent to the sponge-like gift of absorbing foreign words and foreign ideas. But it is due in a very great measure to a system of administration which favoured the growth of 'monopolies' and service guilds. I am, afraid, gentlemen, I am straying from the proper path, but the fact is admitted in all quarters that as a community we, the Mahommedans, were being gradually driven to the wall. It was therefore with no ordinary feelings of pleasure and gratification that the vast Mussulman community hailed the partition of the Province and the first Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who in his uncommon sagacity and sound statesmanship realised that special cases required special care and treatment. His sympathy in the struggle of the Mahommedan community to better their educational and material condition had not only brought heart to dropping souls, but had won the appreciation and admiration of every true and sincere patriot. His resignation therefore is a real disaster to the Mahommedan community of the new Province. A brilliant, widely accomplished, experienced, far-sighted and hard-working statesman, he was an ornament to the Civil Service of India. It is difficult at this time of day adequately to measure the loss to this country which his sudden severance from it will undoubtedly cause. I feel, gentlemen, that if we had as strong a voice as the Hindus in the councils of the empire, or at least as strong a press to engineer an agitation we could show the Government and those who generally take upon themselves to speak on behalf of the dumb millions of India that in many matters at least the pulsation of the Mahommedan community beats in a different direction and to a different tune.'

Source: The Pioneer, 8 August 1906.

40

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
15 August 1906

You say in your letter to me that people in his camp (Gokhale's English friends) have hinted to you the possibility of a departmental enquiry into the working of the new Province. Any suspicion of agreement to such a proposal would be fatal. Mahommedan feeling is accentuated by recent events, and would at once be in a blaze. But all India is looking on now and whether Partition was right or wrong, the faintest sign of withdrawal on our part would be construed as weakness—it would poison our whole rule here. There is only one answer to the suggestion of a reconsideration of Partition. It is dead, dead, dead.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1906.

41

SIR B. FULLER'S RESIGNATION : PROTEST MEETINGS

Dacca, 11 August

A mass meeting of Mahommedans was held at Chowk Bazar this evening. More than 10,000 persons were present. Maulvi Abdul Khairat, an influential local zamindar, was in the chair. The following resolution was proposed and carried—'That the Mahommedans of Dacca express their profound sorrow at the sudden resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who had done so much to ameliorate the condition of the Mussulman community; they regret that Government should have accepted the resignation of such a strong, just and sympathetic administrator, and pray that Government may be pleased to continue the same policy with regard to the Mussulman community as pursued by the Government of Sir Bampfylde Fuller.' The speakers indignantly condemned the weak policy of Government in holding out the olive branch to the agitators by accepting the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller. The community which has remained silent for such a long time, is now resolved to resent the action of Government with regard to Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation.

Rangoon, 11 August

The *Rangoon Gazette* says the statement issued by the *Pioneer*, as to the facts which finally determined Sir Bampfylde Fuller to resign will, we think increase public sympathy with him. It is well known, our contemporary says, that the pressure which had been brought to bear upon the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam before had greatly added to the difficulties that Government had to face, and in the last case, that of the disorderly schoolboys at Sirajgunj, the Lieutenant-Governor decided to refuse the demand of the Government of India. He may have been right or he may have been wrong, but at least he had the courage of his convictions, and he leaves office. It seems not unlikely that the Government of India will see cause in the near future to regret a course of action which left the man on the spot, one of their principal officers no option but to resign. Mr. Brodrick at the India Office could not have been more undiplomatic.

Allahabad, 24 August

At a large and representative meeting of the Mahommedans of Allahabad City held under the Presidency of Maulvi Sheikh Abdul Raoof, talukdar of Abdulpur, the following resolution was adopted and sent to the Viceroy :

The Mahommedans of Allahabad assembled in a meeting record their sincere gratitude for Sir Bampfylde Fuller's just and w administration, and deeply deplore his untimely resignation, which ιey think a national

misfortune, and pray that Government may be pleased to continue the work initiated by Sir Bampfylde Fuller for the amelioration of the condition of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal. They further pray that His Excellency will kindly communicate this to the Secretary of State.

The late Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam and Lady Fuller passed through Allahabad on Friday morning on their way to Bombay. Sir Bampfylde Fuller was met at the station by the Commissioner Mr. Darrah, the Collector Mr. Lovett, and other officials, with Mr. Justice Aikman, and a few old friends, who wished both Sir Bampfylde and Lady Fuller a very cordial good-bye.

Bombay, 24 August

A deputation of Mahommedans, consisting of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Maulvi R fi-ud-Din Ahmed, Nawab Sardar Ali, the Kazi of Bombay, and others, will receive Sir Bampfylde Fuller at Victoria Station to-morrow.

Later a meeting of Mahommedans was held last night to consider steps be taken for receiving Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who has consented by telegram from Moghal Serai to receive a deputation. A large committee will consequently meet him at the station at noon, and escort him to Ballard Pier.

Jabbulpore. 21 August

At a crowded meeting of Mahommedans, held under the presidency of Mr. Hafiz Ahmed, pleader, it was resolved that the meeting do express their extreme regret on the resignation and departure of Sir Bampfylde Fuller. The High School, press, and the offices of the Anjuman Islamia, are closed to-day as a mark of respect.

Lahore, 21 August

An extraordinary meeting of the Anjuman-i-Islamia of the Punjab was held this evening at the Mahommedan Hall, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Maulvi Mohamad Shahdin. It was resolved unanimously to send the following telegram to the Viceroy—'The Anjuman-i-Islamia, representing Punjab Mahommedans, beg to express deep regret at the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, and to respectfully draw the attention of Your Excellency to the profound dissatisfaction caused by its acceptance among all classes of Indian Moslems, as Sir Bampfylde Fuller had evinced genuine sympathy with Moslem aspirations and tried to do justice to them, and made some efforts to remove a few disabilities of Eastern Bengal Moslems. The acceptance of his resignation will prove extremely detrimental to Moslem interests, and intensify the anti-Moslem feeling and political agitation in Bengal. The members respectfully pray for the communication of the above to the Secretary of State.'

It was also resolved to send the following telegram to Sir Bampfylde Fuller—'The Anjuman-i-Islamia of Lahore, as representing the Mahommedans

of the Punjab, begs to express profound regret at Your Honour's resignation, which it considers extremely detrimental to Moslem interests in the new Province and to offer grateful thanks for Your Honour's generous efforts in promoting the cause of Moslem advancement and for the genuine sympathy with just Moslem aspirations. The Anjuman hopes that Your Honour will hereafter continue the same interest in Mahommedan welfare, and pray that occasions for doing work of Moslem good may present themselves to Your Honour.'

Source : The Pioneer, 13, 23 and 26 August 1906.

42

MAHOMMEDAN'S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER

'We, the members of the Provincial Mahommedan Association Eastern Bengal and Assam and its affiliated branches, beg permission to bid you on the eve of your departure from this country a very sad farewell on behalf of ourselves and the entire Mahommedan community of this province, whom we have the honour to represent. The announcement of Your Honour's sudden and untimely resignation has been a great shock to the Mahommedans not only of this province but of the whole of India; and everywhere the followers of Islam are giving expression to their profound sorrow at the loss of such a just, strong and sympathetic administrator, who endeared himself to all classes of the community by his untiring efforts to promote the interest of the neglected and unfortunate Mussulman community of Eastern Bengal and Assam. We take this opportunity of expressing our great indebtedness to Your Honour for what you have done to ameliorate the condition of the Mahommedans of the new Province. We do not find words adequate enough to convey our deep sense of gratitude to Your Honour for the very great interest you have always evinced in the aims and aspirations of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal. You have, Sir, infused a new life into the community, and the famous Lyon Circular has made us realise our responsibilities and created in us a desire to improve our educational condition, as that is the only way of proving to Government that we are worthy of its sympathy and patronage. By doing justice to our community in the matter of Government appointments and official encouragement, Your Honour has contributed not a little towards the social, political and educational improvement of the Mahommedans of the Province, and for this

act of kindness and justice we shall always remain indebted to you. It is indeed very unfortunate for the community that Your Honour should have been taken away from us at a time when the process of awakening had begun among the Mahommedans of this country, and when we were greatly in need of sympathy and encouragement. It is, therefore, with a heart full of sorrow and affliction that we bid good-bye to Lady Fuller and Your Honour. We are losing in Your Honour a kind friend, an able ruler, and a sympathetic adviser; but our greatest consolation at the present moment lies in the hope that, although you will be far away from us, Your Honour will continue to take the same loving interest in our unfortunate community. On our part, we beg to assure Your Honour that you will carry with yourself the best wishes and prayers of His Majesty the King Emperor's loyal, devoted and peaceful Mahommedan subjects. We wish God-speed to Lady Fuller and Your Honour, and fervently pray to the Almighty to shower his choicest blessings upon you both, and to grant you an ever-increasing lease of life, happiness and prosperity.'

The address was signed by the Hon'ble the Nawab Bahadur Khwaja Salimolla, C.S.I., of Dacca, President of the Association, and other influential gentlemen.

His Honour, in reply, said that he could never forget the manner in which the Mahommedans had welcomed him when he first came to the Province, and that he would always remember the kind farewell they were giving him now. The address characterised his departure as a loss, but perhaps some good might come out of the loss. The gain had been this, that the partition of Bengal which had for sometime been hovering in the balance, was now a settled fact. His nine months' experience had enabled him to say that the partition was absolutely justified. Lord Curzon had found that the Province of Bengal was too big to be efficiently controlled by one man, and that a partition would not only conduce to the better administration of a neglected province, but would, at the same time, safeguard the interests of the Mahommedan community—a community which had always been famous for its loyalty. Lord Curzon's policy was a wide and far-sighted policy, and he was right in thinking that the partition of Bengal was absolutely necessary and would be beneficial. The speaker was not at first much inclined to accept the latter view, but his experience of this Province now told him that he was very much mistaken when he came to the Province. He was surprised to notice how grossly the interests of the Mahommedans were being neglected. For instance, in the Police Department the percentage of Mahommedans was exceedingly low. Such a disproportion was highly injudicious and might pervert the ends of justice. The proportion in the Provincial and subordinate Civil Service and the other departments was likewise very low. He did what he could in this matter. He was glad to notice from the address that the Mahommedans realised the significance of what thay styled the Lyon Circular. The reason why Mahommedans could not get into Government service in

larger numbers was not want of education certainly. There was perhaps as much education among the Mahommedans as among the Hindus. The Mahommedans who gave knowledge and culture to the West were still burning the lamp of learning, but they were burning an old lamp, though a new one was being taken advantage of by the Hindus. The Mahommedans were paying more attention to their own classics—Arabic and Persian—than was perhaps expedient under modern conditions. He exhorted them to pay more attention to the study of English and science. Referring to the recent Mahommedan demonstrations in Eastern Bengal, he said that they could in no way mean anything but loyalty to the King-Emperor. It was a pity that party politics should be allowed to interfere in the governing of India, and that the time had now come when the Mahommedans could not keep silent and trust the Government absolutely for justice.

Source : The Pioneer, 26 August 1906.

43

MAHOMMEDANS AND SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER

As Sir Bampfylde Fuller evinced genuine sympathy with Muslim aspirations, tried to do justice to them and made efforts to remove disabilities, the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal regard his resignation as extremely detrimental to Muslim interests. This is the general feeling among the Mahommedan community and nothing will persuade them that they are wrong. *The Muslim Patriot* observed the other day : 'The policy of silence which they (Mahommedans) have so long pursued has proved disastrous to them, it has resulted in their existence being ignored both by their countrymen and Government. The Bengalis do not care for their opinion and are determined to agitate against their united wishes. It is only rarely that British Government remembers that there are among their subjects a class like Mussulmans having rights and interests of their own. They believe that it was on one such rare occasion that the Partition of Bengal was conceived and effected, not only on grounds of administrative difficulty but also to source their gradual progress and advancement.' But the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk put the case more plainly some little time ago. The Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal, said he, writing to the Aligarh Institute Gazette had, comparatively with the Hindus, been left so far back in the race of progress that with the state of things then (before the partition) prevailing in the province, they could not hope to stand side by side with the Hindus. Their

position, therefore, necessitated a change of conditions so that they might compete with their rivals. It was true that a few Mahommedans were awakening to the necessity of education and got some degrees at the University, but the ways of progress were blocked by a nation which would never see them advance. Of course, there was the Government, but the Government could not help them under existing conditions. There was none among the Mahommedans to keep Government in mind of their rights and privileges and if there was a reference made here and there in a memorial or address to a Lieutenant-Governor or a Viceroy, it generally contained unmeaning improper requests which could hardly be expected either to draw the attention of Government or to be of any use to the Mahommedans. But the Partition of Bengal in the opinion of the Nawab gave an opportunity to the Mahommedans to improve their condition and to gain lost ground and said he, if the Mahommedans do not avail themselves of this golden opportunity, they are doomed for ever. The Mahommedans in the new province number over seventy per cent, but mere numerical greatness will not help to raise their condition and if they want to improve they must seize the opportunities of higher education.

It is said that Government is showing undue favour to Mahommedans but the allegation is wrong and is based on racial prejudice. 'It is the principle of Government to give more consideration to the majority of members, to give opportunities of improvement to those who are backward, to educate those who are ignorant and to give a share in the Government of the country to those who are fit for such responsibility. Government is acting up to these just principles for those who have seen their own community prosper alone, for a hundred years, to approve of a change in the existing conditions. The Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal are not only pleased with the partition, but they consider it as a boon to their national cause; and although they have for the last hundred years undergone a state of dejection, they are now awakening to a new spirit of activity and hopefulness and their leaders are moved by a new feeling of hope and enthusiasm to help their own community. It is a matter of regret however that Sir Bampfylde Fuller has resigned the post of Lieutenant-Governor in Eastern Bengal and it is felt by the Mahommedan community that no greater calamity could have fallen on the Mahommedans of that province. It is feared that an idea will get abroad among the newly educated Mahommedans that the only way of obtaining their rights from Government is Political Agitation. The *Muslim Patriot* is of a similar opinion and writes— 'Government has, by its acceptance of Sir B. Fuller's resignation paid a premium or increased political agitation. The Bengali press has already given indications of the Hindu attitude. The Bengali nation refuses to accept the Partition of Bengal as an irrevocable fact and has declared its determination to continue the agitation as hitherto in the firm conviction that Victory must fall to its lot at no distant date. Mussulmans have seen that their loyal

silence has been misinterpreted, their respectful wishes have been unheeded and their interests have been sacrificed to appease the noisy; and to make themselves heard in the councils of the Empire, they are anxious to follow in the foot-steps of their Hindu fellow-countrymen.'

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, August 1906.

44

MUSLIMS ON SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER'S RESIGNATION

When Sir Bampfylde resigned from the newly carved province of Bengal on account of his differences with the Government, it gave a great shock to the Mussulman community. Mass Meeting of Mahommedans in Feni, Neokhali, Madras, Mymensingh, Faridpur, Dacca, Calcutta, Allahabad, Bombay were called in which Government was condemned and Sir Fuller was praised. Resolutions were also passed. In a meeting at Dacca, a resolution was passed—'The members of the Provincial Mahommedans Association of Eastern Bengal and Assam and its affiliated branches in meeting assembled record their profound sorrow at a sudden and untimely resignation of Sir Bampfyde Fuller, a ruler who for his abilities, justice, kind-heartedness and nobility of character was loved by the entire Mahommedan community of the new province.'

In a meeting at Feni the following Resolution was carried unanimously 'Mahommedans of Feni sub-division in meeting assembled record the deep sense of gratitude to Mr. Morley for his assurance that the partition—a measure calculated to promote the welfare of the people of the new Province—is a settled fact, they emphatically contradict the statements made by a section of the Bengali press that the agitators are some parliamentary Members to the effect that Mahommedans are opposed to the Partition, the meeting assures Government that this measure has their full support, and they strongly disapprove of the conduct of the Bengali press and a handful of Hindu agitators in casting unwarrantable opinions on the just and benign policy of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, records its sense of gratitude to Sir Bampfylde Fuller and his Government for what they have done to ameliorate the condition of the Mussulman community.'

Source : The Pioneer, 22 August 1906.

45

LETTER FROM ABDUL RAHMAN KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

24 August 1906

Sir, Lately the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller has created a great sensation in Bengal. The Bengalis, are exulting over it, while the Mahommedans are mortified. But we think that no reasonable man will be too happy or too sorry for it. We have good reasons to believe that those who go to either extreme are but insincere agitators, and man ought not to put the least faith in them. One more thing to notice is that in this matter some newspapers play the part of 'The agitators' while they violently condemn this act in others. They are trying their head and heart to set the Mahommedans against the Hindus either because their opinions are biased by coming in contact with a few learned but I am sorry to say unwise Mahommedan gentlemen or because they are the votaries of the 'divide-and-rule' policy.

However, as regards the state of affairs in Bengal we hold an opinion quite different from that of some august gentlemen at Dacca, and I have very good information that even at that place most of our Mussulman bretheren agree with us in this matter, though they are sometimes compelled to do as the Nabobs and their Waziers laid them do. Let it be known to the public at large that the vast majority of us do not like to be represented by this Mahommedan clique if it be inclined to proceed in such a way. We do not like to follow blindly. But if we are led by somebody we must reason as to the cause of our following him, and at the same time we must be pretty sure of the place he will lead us to.

In India the Hindus and the Mahommedans have always quarrelled against one another, and the world has seen the result of it. Both the communities are weakened and degraded, and have very little voice in the government of their country. Now let us try a different experiment, let us unite together and see the outcome of this union.

I hope that ere long the true opinion of the majority of the Mahommedans gentlemen of Dacca will come out in spite of the efforts of the perverted and wrong headed minority to suppress it.

Source : The Pioneer, 29 August 1906.

46

LETTER FROM M.H. KIRMANI TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER

May I ask for a little space in your valuable paper to bring before the public the feelings of the Mahommedans of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh on the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller. The enlightened Mahommedans fully symathise with their co-religionists of Eastern Bengal Province, and consider that it is a great personal loss to the whole Mahommedan community of India. Had the Mahommedans been crying 'Bande Mataram, Shivaji ki Jai' and other similar non-sensical national cries with Bengal agitators and taking part in boycotting and other rebellious measures, the Government would not have played false to them. We feel that we have greatly and unjustly been neglected both by the Secretary of State and the Government of India. Perhaps, Mr. John Morley and the Government of India thought that the resignation of Sir. B. Fuller would put down all the agitation in Bengal. If so, they made a very grave mistake. This will, on the other hand, lead to greater agitation to undo what is already an accomplished fact. To quote a leading Bengali paper 'We must continue the agitation against partition, as before, in the firm confidence that victory must be ours at no distant day.'

It will be well for the successor of Sir B. Fuller to take over the administration of the province with a firm and act with sympathy and in consultation with the enlightened and educated people of the Province.

Source : The Pioneer, 30 August 1906.

47

LETTER FROM L. HARE, C.I.E., LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF EASTERN BENGAL TO LORD MINTO

2 September 1906

You asked me to send you fortnightly confidential letters about affairs in this province. I have just received a cypher telegram from Home Office, calling for a fortnightly report on partition agitation, and you will not, I think, wish me in future to report what will be contained in those reports when they begin.

There have been numerous Mahommedan meetings to express sympathy

with Sir B. Fuller, and there is no doubt a general Mahommedan fear that it means a blow to their interests. The police confirm the figure of 7,000 Mahommedans at the Dacca meeting. The Hindus, of course, try to belittle these meetings. The Swadeshi meeting on the 7th (anniversary day) only ran to 3,000. The relations between Mahommedans and Hindus have been much strained, and this showed itself on the Janam Astami festival at Dacca. This is a Hindu festival. Two rival castes of weavers have, from the days when the weaving industry was the great work of Dacca, brought out rival shows, at which great bamboo and paper erections, representing pilgrims and social incidents, are brought through the streets on cart-wheels, elephants, horses, etc., and mimes acting plays and shows of various kinds take part. It was given out that one show would caricature Sir B. Fuller, and it was said that if it came out, the Mahommedans would attack it and smash it up. The Nawab of Dacca and other leading Mahommedans were advised to restrain the Mahommedans. This they did, but the Mahommedans kept away altogether, and refused to lend carts or drag them, and so the show could not come out at all. The Hindus were bitter at this, but tried to save their faces by saying the weather was not propitious, which was partly true, and the processions are often put off on account of rain.

The most significant feature of the incident is the perfect discipline of the Mahommedans. You may have noticed the papers often refer to Mahommedans attending Swadeshi meetings; a few have done so, and a few have taken part in the Swadeshi proceedings. But this is only for a quiet life, and because of pressure from their Hindu neighbours. No whip has gone out forbidding this, and the number of Mahommedans joining in Swadeshi is significant. I believe the Mahommedans will combine to a man, if their leaders give the word, and will absolutely boycott the Hindus if so ordered.

There has been some seditious preaching at Silchar, in Cachar, by the Editor of the *Indian Empire*. If his speech is correctly reported, he openly advocates violence, and threatens war. It would probably be impossible to get reliable evidence to satisfy the High Court, as to what is said at these meetings. From the mofussil of Bakarganj (outside the head quarters station of Barisal) a better tone and more civility to the District officer is reported. Famine relief is, though in a measure, to account for this.

Floods have been very bad, and have caused a panic, by stopping new rice and imported rice coming into the market. The Mahommedans of Dacca naturally accuse the Hindu Merchants of retaliating for the boycott of the Janam Astami, and the belief in a local corner in rice is very general. The floods now going down, and the panics have subsided. The permanent loss cannot yet be estimated. It is always exaggerated at the time the floods are on. But the general report is that the people themselves do not show much anxiety and they know best....

The private affairs of the Nawab of Dacca are in a bad way. Were it not for a family quarrel, the family would apply for a settlement under the

'Settled Estates Act of Bengal.' Attic Ulla, a brother of Salim Ulla, the Nawab, and some of the ladies of the family are standing out. It is to be hoped that (they) will all come in, as otherwise those who stand out and all the family will be ruined. If the whole family can be got to apply, an arrangement will have to be made to settle the debts by borrowing from Government, and taking over the management of the Estates as security. I mentioned this as the Hindu creditors are being urged to press for their money, and a political colour is thus given to the matter. But I would urge the saving of this family in case (as I have often saved Hindu families), as a matter of the utmost importance.

I have consented to receive a Mahommedan address and deputation at Shillong. The Hindus, I understand, have not made up their minds, what they will do about address to me. I have not yet seen the terms of the address. I shall probably in reply only give my assurance that their interest and welfare shall have my careful attention.

Source : Government of India, Home Department, Proceedings October 1906.

48

ABSTRACT OF REPORTS FROM EASTERN BENGAL AND ASSAM REGARDING THE ANTI-PARTITION AGITATION

MEETING

The number of meetings held during the fortnight (second half of August) was not large, the greatest activity being shown in the places visited by Babu Bepin Chandra Pal, editor of the '*New India*' and '*Bande Mataram*' newspapers. On the conclusion of the Conference at Sylhet he left for Cachar via Karimganj, where he halted and delivered speeches of the usual type. He reached Cachar on the night of the 19th August and was met by a large number of sympathisers, including some of officials. A meeting was held on the 21st idem when he delivered an address, lasting two hours, of a distinctly seditious tone. He urged that the British should no longer be called *Sahibs* but *Feringhis*. He strongly advocated a continuance of boycott, which he said would induce the English merchants to represent matters in parliament. Another meeting of a similar character was held on the 22nd. On the 23rd in reply to an address presented by the 'Bhikshukh Samprdaya', a society of school boys, Babu Bepin Chandra Pal again urged the desirability of continuing the boycott. He quoted the case of a police inspector who on account

of his anti-swadeshi views had been socially boycotted and was unable to effect the marriage of his daughter. He also said that all Natives should resign Government appointments as this will bring the work of Government to stand-still. It is reported that he was somewhat disappointed by the results of his visit to Cachar as he obtained practically no subscription and was compelled to borrow money in order to meet his travelling expenses. He left two agents behind him with instructions to travel through the villages and preach the boycott of foreign goods, but these gentlemen could obtain no local assistance and left Cachar a few days after Bepin Babu. The latter went on from Cachar to Tippera and delivered political speeches at meetings held at Comilla on the 26th, 27th and 28th August. At the last meeting it was resolved that the Calcutta leaders should be requested not to memorialise the Secretary of State, and that as the people of Eastern Bengal and Assam do not attend receptions of, or present addresses to, the Lieutenant-Governor, and do not stand for election as members of the Legislative Council, the leaders in Western Bengal should be requested to adopt a similar attitude until the Partition is cancelled. It was intended to hold another meeting at which Babu Bepin Chandra Pal was to propose Bal Gangadhar Tilak as President of the next National Congress, but when it became evident that there would be strong opposition the meeting was abandoned. The result of Bepin Babu's visit to Comilla has been to divide Bengali opinion in that place.

At Dacca a meeting of Hindus was held to consider what their attitude towards the new Lieutenant-Governor should be. A copy of a circular issued on this subject by one of the leading Hindus of Dacca was published in the *Englishman* of 3rd September. The opinion on this gentleman is that the Hindus should not only welcome Mr. Hare, but that the People's Associations should present an address to him. In reply to this letter, Aswini Kumar Dutt of Barisal, after consulting other agitators, said that Mr. Hare should receive the same treatment as Sir B. Fuller, or else the cause of Swadeshism will suffer. This view was advocated in a leading article which appeared in the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* of the 27th August.

At Kishoreganj in the Mymensing district it was resolved after a small meeting to boycott and outcaste those who used foreign goods, and a committee was formed to see that effect was given to the resolution. At a meeting in the bar library at Iswarganj the boycott of foreign goods was advocated.

From Bakargunj it is repoted that a number of unimportant Swadeshi meetings have been held in different parts of the district, but that the agitation seems to be losing force. A copy of the speech delivered by Surendra Nath Banerji on the occasion of his visit to Barisal is attached.

No official reports have been receved from Faridpur, but according to the '*Bengalee*' there were a number of meetings in that district, and the Swadeshi movement was being pushed with vigour.

There was a small meeting at Sudharam in the Noakhali district as a

counterblast to a Mahommedan meeting referred to below. No meeting is mentioned in the reports from other districts.

MAHOMMEDAN MEETINGS

The Anjuman-Islamia of Mymensing held a meeting on the 20th August and resolutions were passed regretting Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation and then thanking Mr. Morley for his assurance that the partition was a settled fact. The attendance numbered 300. There was small meeting of a similar character at Natrokona.

A meeting of about 100 Mahommedans was held at Sudharam, Noakhali district to express regret at the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller.

At a meeting of 100 Mahommedans held on the 26th August at Barisal, it was resolved to agitate against the reversal of the Partition.

No complete information has yet been received regarding the attendance at the meetings reported in the last narrative, but it appears that the attendance at the large meeting at Dacca was 7,000 and not 30,000 as stated in the *Englishman.*

FEELINGS BETWEEN MAHOMMEDANS AND HINDUS

A certain amount of ill-feeling between the Hindus and Mahommedans continues in parts of the Mymensing district, and the Hindu landlords of Iswarganj and Nandail are reported to be putting pressure on their Mahommedan tenants. The police have brought to light fifteen instance in which tenants have been fined by their landlords in sums varying from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 35, because they helped Maulvi Sami-ud-din, notwithstanding the orders of their zemindars. Special inquiries are being made into these cases.

The Mahommedans of Silchar assembled to the number of 200 prayers and resolved that they would not join the Hindus in their disloyal attitude but would use imported salt and other goods and would refrain from using country products as by this means the boycott would be defeated. A general meeting of the Mahommedans is to be held shortly to discuss these matters. On hearing of the decisions arrived at by the Mahommedans a number of the local swadeshi advocates approached a leading Mussulman and urged him and his co-religionists to join the swadeshi movement which they said, would benefit the country. These advances met with no success and the Mahommedans pointed out that the Hindus had already prevented washermen, barbers and carters from working for Mahommedans and the latter had been obliged to build carts of their own and to import Mahommedan barbers and washermen.

The Janam Astami procession at Dacca referred to in the last narrative (gone) off quietly on the 28th and 29th August. The great bulk of the Mahommedan population held aloof, but some of the members of the Nawab's family who are not on good terms with him attended, their object being, it is believed, rather to annoy the Nawab than to show any sympathy with the Hindus.

THE BOYCOTT

At Silchar local cart drivers refused to carry a consignment of Liverpool salt belonging to a Mahommedan from the railway station and the assistance of prisoners had to be obtained. The Hindu Station Master, who, is an advocate of Swadeshi principles, charged the Mahommedan merchants demurrage, but this was promptly ordered to be refunded when the facts were reported to the Traffic manager. The large Hindu traders at Silchar have brought pressure to bear on the petty shop-keepers to prevent their selling foreign salt. At Maloogran in the same district the cart drivers have refused to handle foreign salt or sugar, as they have been told that these have been prepared with the aid of the bones of cows. The washermen have also decided not to wash articles made of foreign material.

From Mymensing it is reported that the boycott is waning even in the Tangail sub-division. Marwaris have taken large consignments of Manchester cloth to the Bazaar and the agitators are consulting as to what should be done, but no active measures to prevent the sale of these goods seem to have been taken up to the present.

At case of interference with the sale of foreign goods was reported from the Sylhet district, but the man who suffered declined to make any complaint.

At a meeting at Barisal, presided over by Babu Aswini Kumar Dutt, it was resolved to start a society for the purpose of punishing socially any one dealing in foreign goods. There is not much evidence of actual annoyance of this kind, but mention is made of a civil suit having been brought against a sub-inspector of this district who rendered himself obnoxious to the swadeshi party. The suit has been dismissed with costs. Another case is reported in which the Manager of market was convicted of assaulting a Mussulman who tried to sell Liverpool salt in the market.

MISCELLANEOUS

A number of Hindus who assaulted the District Magistrate of Dacca on the 8th July have been convicted by the Hindu Deputy Magistrate and sentenced to six months' imprisonment each, with the addition of fine in some cases.

It is reported from Bakargunj the letters were addressed to Babu Rojani Kanto Das and Babu Aswini Kumar Dutta by Sir B. Fuller before leaving India. These letters are presumably those which appeared first in the *Indian Nation* and were reproduced in most of the newspapers.

Source : Government of India, Home Department, Proceedings October 1906.

49

LETTER FROM L. HARE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF EAST BENGAL TO LORD MINTO

19 September 1906

At the present time the agitation appears to be mainly concerned with the Swadeshi movement, and is directed towards the keeping up of anti-British and anti-Government feeling that has been associated with it. The speakers at the agitation meetings deal with the evils of British rule, the necessity for unity and the fostering of a spirit of patriotism, and the boycott of English and other foreign goods. There is very little mention made of the Partition, its supposed hardships and inconvenience are rarely referred to.... But it is probable that an effort will be made to demonstrate against Partition, in force, on the 16th October next, the anniversary of the Constitution of the new Province. This has been preached as essential by all leaders....

The present differences between the Calcutta leaders appear likely to weaken the force of the agitation. Babu Bepin Chandra Pal, the leader of the extremists who has been pressing the candidature of Mr. Tilak for the post of President of the Congress, and was violently opposed the policy of petitioning the Secretary of State against Partition, has been on an extensive tour through Eastern Bengal.... His speeches are openly seditious and he advises his audience 'to prepare for war, as the period of the British domination is coming to an end.' He speaks of the English with contempt as *Feringhis*, asserts the power of the Hindus in India... and urges his younger hearers to take to lathi play and wrestling in the place of football and cricket. His speeches are undoubtedly doing a great deal of harm, but his violence has caused dissension, and other leaders, such as Babu Bhupendra Nath Bose are definitely opposing him. The latter has sent round a widely published letter counselling moderation, and one of the local leaders, Babu Ananda Chandra Rai has recently issued a circular, to which much attention is being paid, advising his party to give up the attempts to boycott Government, and the Lieutenant-Governor, and to resume their normal attitude towards the authorities; while still maintaining the Swadeshi movement and the agitation against the Partition.

In Mymensing and in Sylhet, to a lesser degree, the Hindu landlords, are persecuting all Mahommedan tenants who have been concerned in any way with the recent Mahommedan riots.... Heavy fines have been inflicted and many have been wrongly confined, but the tenants are too poor to come forward and complain.... But the action of the landlords is adding to the strong feelings of irritation and unrest among the Mahommedans, who have behaved with admirable self-restraint upto now but one waiting anxiously for instructions from their leaders as to what their future line of action is to be.

There can be no doubt that Mahommedan feeling has been much roused of late and that is wholly against the Hindu agitation and the boycott of British goods.... It is possible that the Mahommedans may organise counter-demonstrations to nullify the effect of the Hindu celebration of 'Partition Day'.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

50

LETTER FROM MOHAMAD YUSUF KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

It is a true saying that behind every cloud there is a silver lining. The sorrowful circumstances which have resulted in the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller have carried with them a message prophetic our deliverance from the thraldom of our own political inaction and have only tended to quicken the spirit of progress and enlightenment. The question of the partition of Bengal, which owes its conception to the sagacity and political insight of Lord Curzon, and which was whitherto trembling in the balance, has now become a settled fact. I assure you, Mahommedan brethren, that now it can never be otherwise. Neither Mr. Morley nor any man of commonsense can say or unsay a fact in the same breath. It goes without saying that Mr. Morley is not prepared to offend the feelings of the millions of Mahommedans in quick succession. Of all the periods in the history of the Indian Empire none is so eventful as the present one; it has solemnised the sacrament of the national union of the Mahommedans. I am convinced that Mr. Morley understands full well that deep sense of loyalty may calm down the Mussulman fervour, but it will be no better than the temporary lull which often betokens the bursting forth of a more violent and fiercer storm of opposition. The demonstrations of the Mahommedans at Dacca and other places have shown how keenly they are feeling. Some of the Mahommedans are of opinion that if the Government allows itself to be terrorised by a boisterous community, if it does not feel strong enough to stand the lip-and-tongue campaign waged by the Bengalis, where is the guarantee that it will shield us against their encroachment and excess ? Here is a piece of political wisdom which is impossible to reconcile with our notion of what a strong Government ought to be. The awakening and the interest in public affairs, which recent events in East Bengal have ushered in have assumed permanency and intensity of purpose, and we will not be far wrong in saying that the

problem of our future well-being is more than half-solved. All that is needed on our part is not windy oratory or hysterical performance on the public platform, but work—honest and solid work.

Source : The Pioneer, 23 September 1906.

51

RESOLUTION PASSED BY MYMENSINGH ANJUMAN IN SUPPORT OF THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

A general meeting of Mymensingh Anjuman was held today when it was resolved that a strong rumour being afloat that the policy indicated in the Lyon Circular will not be acted upon, this meeting respectfully requests Government that an early declaration on the subject may be made to relieve Mahommedans from depressive suspense; this meeting emphatically assures Government that the slightest modification in the partition will be ruinous both to the Government and Mussulmans; the present seditious agitation engineered by interested parties is producing a demoralising effect upon the public; this meeting suggests that if Government considers that there is genuineness in the fictitious facts ventilated by interested agitators, it will be pleased to appoint for the public welfare a strong commission to ascertain Mahommedan opinion.

Source : The Pioneer, 28 September 1906.

52

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE ANJUMAN ISLAMIA SIRAJGANJ IN SUPPORT OF THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

That this meeting resolves that the 16th October, being the first anniversary day of the creation of the new province an outward manifestation of the internal pleasure and joy of the Mussulmans of Sirajganj should be made by going out in a grand procession on the forthcoming 16th October next, as the formation of the new province has already done much good and benefit to the Mahommedan community, who form the major portion of its

entire population. This meeting expresses and admits that the partition is to the good and benefit of the Mahommedan community and it has already benefitted the hitherto backward and neglected portion of Bengal in general and the Mahommedans in particular, and that the misrepresentation of the Hindu papers as to the feelings and sentiments of the Mahommedan community is downright falsehood. This meeting respectfully begs to entreat the Indian Government and the State Secretary for India to give it the assurance that the policy adopted by Sir B. Fuller's Government with regard to the Mahommedan Community will remain unchanged, and that the interest of the Mahommedans in general will be maintained in the spirit of the Lyon Circular.

Source : The Pioneer, 11 October 1906.

53

SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER'S RESIGNATION : MAHOMMEDAN DEMONSTRATIONS

The Mussulman community of Bakarganj in a meeting assembled, deeply deplore the sudden and untimely resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who was one of the most wise, just and sympathetic administrators we ever had in our part of the country. They regret that at the present time, when the country was seething with disaffection, and seditious agitator was at its height, the Government of India and at Home, by accepting the resignation, have committed not only a political blunder, sure to lower the prestige of the British power, the prestige that alone was hitherto account for the submission of millions in India, but have inflicted a severe blow upon the feeling of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal and Assam, who in spite of various kinds of persecution and temptation from the agitators, remained loyal throughout. This meeting begs also to record their disapproval of the weak Government policy of yielding to the agitators, and mourn this event as a national and public calamity.

(*a*) The Mahommedans of Borsakaty, Sutiakaty, Fourikhar, Balihari, Boldia, Kolardonia, Shohagdol, etc., police station Shorupkaty, Bakarganj, held a monster meeting on the 12th August at Shohagdol, passing resolutions expressing surprise and grief at Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation, supporting the partition and lamenting the ignorance of Government in respect to the feelings of the local Mahommedans, who depended too much on Government and, therefore thought agitation useless. Maulvi Ahmed Ali occupied the

chair.

(*b*) The following is a resolution passed by the Anjuman-i-Muin-al Islam at Patuakhali—

The Anjuman-i-Moin-al-Islam, Patuakhali (Bakarganj District), learns with deep and profound sorrow of the sudden and untimely resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, who was the right ruler in the right place, and respectfully invite the kind attention of the Government to reconsider the matter.[1]

Source : The Government of India, Home Department, Proceedings October 1906.

54

LETTER FROM MUHAMMAD YUSUF KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE 'ENGLISHMAN'

There are moments in one's life when words fail to give utterance to those feelings that are upper most in the heart. I find it difficult to portray and bring home to public apprehension the true feelings of eighteen millions of Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

I am deeply convinced that the Mahommedans have thoroughly grasped the situation and are not vaillating between the two extremes of to do or not to do. Sir Bampfylde Fuller has gone and many will come and go, but what grieves me most is that the Government of India did not display greater vigour in supporting its just and able Lieutenant-Governor. A man on the spot, with a full sense of responsibility, deemed it his duty to act in certain ways, whilst one seven thousand miles away, who has only a student's knowledge of India and who is perpetually worried by pressure of a noisy political section can never be expected to be in a position safely to direct the Lieutenant-Governor to act otherwise than according to his own mapped-out plans. Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation is memorable event in the annals of Bengal, for it was on this occasion that the Mahommedans met together in spite of the bad weather, to record their protest against a seemingly weak policy in our Supreme Government, as well as to demonstrate their sorrow for Sir Bampfylde's great loss to the country. I have reason to say that this event has solemnised the sacrament of the National Union of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

The Nawab Bahadur at the meeting urged them to act wisely, unitedly and not like the other section of inhabitants in this country. Mahommedans of this province are very fortunate, for they have found a leader most

sympathetic, kind considerate, loyal to the King and full of regard for others. I am convinced that Mahommedans, under such a leader, are sure eventually to be crowned with success.

In the course of his speech our Nawab said, 'The Mahommedans never received at the hands of Government that amount of attention to which they are entitled and it was to Government of Sir Bampfylde Fuller which for the first time has done justice to this backward community.' By this the Nawab Bahadur did not mean to pass an indirect vote, assure upon every one of Sir Bampfylde Fuller's predecessors in Eastern Bengal and Assam; because His Honour had no predecessor at all. He found a very large majority of Mahommedans and he thought of doing justice which had hitherto been overlooked owing to the machination of Hindus. I fully trust and believe that Sir Bamfylde Fuller's successors will not hesitate to follow his liberal and statesman like policy.

Hindus, you have certainly no cause to complain against your English masters as wielding an intolerant rule. They have been silent on the sedition of a section of the native press for years past, during the last twelve months, you have been permitted to hold meeting after meeting, to interest yourself in giving publicity to ill-advised aims and aspirations, with a degree of toleration absolutely unfair to the other loyal portions of the community. You have over-educated yourselves in political literature; excess of everything is bad, you must be allowed to go so far and no further. You have done enough to put discredit upon the prestige of Government. You indirectly tried to have an independent native rule in Barisal. You are hoisting a national flag in Calcutta, your head-quarters of swadeshi revolt. What does this distinctive flag symbolise—an extremely revolutionary spirit ? Did you ever start in your history with any flag. Mahommedans have also their flag; but are they going to hoist it against the interest of Government. No, they are loyal subjects and will prove so to the last, but are not now expected to suffer the blows and fuffets of Hindus any more. The blood of the Mahommedans is slow to rise but once risen it will continue till this bully, view of the whole situation. Government must suppress the Hindus now; it is a sign of hopeless weakness in Government to allow one section of the inhabitants to have everything its own way and to offend the feelings of its loyal subjects. Now Mahommedans will not remain like 'dumb driven cattle', but they strive to the 'heroes in the strife'.

Source : The Government of India, Home Department, Proceedings October 1906.

55

LETTER FROM HARE TO LORD MINTO

I

20 October 1906

There is not very much to say... I notice the attempts of the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* and the *Bengalee* to be little the Mahommedan Deputation[1], and the lying assertions that this and the recent 16th October meetings to celebrate the Partition have been got up by the Government officials. They are perfectly genuine Mahommedan movements, just as genuine as the Hindu opinions.

I have received telegrams of some 21 Mahommedans meeting on 16th October to celebrate the Partition day. Some of them are said to have been very largely attended—20,000 in Dacca, 1,000 at Mymensingh, 6,000 at Faridpur, 1,000 at Sylhet....

I shall have to pass orders very shortly upon the question of giving effect to our determination to give to Mahommedans a fairer share of Government oppointments. I understand that you would wish to see the draft of any orders upon a question of this sort, before it issues.

II

31 October 1906

I have been watching very carefully to see if the Mahommedan pro-partition movement is genuine or not, and how for it really represents Mahommedan feeling.... As far as I can ascertain, the movement has genuine support from the great mass of the Mahommedans of this Province, who were extremely sick of all the trouble they have been put to in the matter of the boycott, in having to pay more and get worse goods, and the fines and oppression they have been subjected to by the *amla* of the landlords at the instigation of the agitators.

I cannot find any truth in the allegation of Mahommedan support of the anti-Partition movement, though a few Mahommedans of very evil repute with their community, are being paid to preach boycott. Also some members of the family of the Nawab of Dacca, who are fighting the Nawab in family affairs, are coquetting with the agitators to gain support in their quarrell. I very much fear the downfall and ruin of this old family and its innumerable dependents, and its utter extinction unless they will come to reason and make use of the settled Estates Act. Possibly some Mahommedans in other parts of India who do not feel the oppression of the Mahommedan ryots which is

[1] Simla Deputation, 1 October 1906.

the consequence of the agitation, may not be in favour of partition.

There have been several incidents which show that the Mahommedans are not prepared to bear much longer this open oppression, but of course a great many are very much under the thumb of the landlords. In Dacca an attack on a Mahommedan flag nearly led to a very serious riot, but Mahommedan leaders restrained their followers, and the Hindus gave way and compromised, by giving 25 mounds of rice to poor, endowing two beds for Mahommedans in the local Mitford Hospital, and sending away for six months two out of the three Hindu assailants.

In Mymensingh there are clear signs that the ryots, both Hindus and Mahommedans, are not prepared to obey their *zamindars* any longer, and if the latter press things too hard there will be very probably a boycott of the *zamindars*.

The feeling about your reply to the Mahommedan address[1], as far as reports have come in is, that it was sympathetic and satisfactory.... But it is also felt that it was a very guarded reply.

...the *Bengalee* and *Amrita* say it is Government who are setting the Mahommedans against the Hindus, but it is the agitators, who have exasperated the tenantry, who happen to be Mahommedans, while those who oppress them happen to be Hindus. It is only a geographical accident that religion has come into the question at all.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

56

NAWAB SALIMULLAH KHAN ON THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

...no one can deny that the potentialities of the New Province are as great, if not greater, as those of the older Province. The old Province of Bengal was unwieldy, both in extent and population, and its rulers, in spite of themselves, could not bestow that amount of attention to its eastern portion as it deserved on account of its importance. The attention of Government and the people was centred in and around the metropolis to the great detriment of the outlying districts. The surplus revenues of the rich and prosperous districts of Eastern Bengal were being expended elsewhere. At last our paternal Government saw this and separated the eastern districts.... As the people . : now slowly but surely realising that Bengal has been partitioned solely for the benefit of the inhabitants of Eastern Bengal, the misguided

[1] The Address presented to Lord Minto by the Simla Deputation.

agitation and consequent unrest on account of the separation are giving place to sober consideration and undisguised satisfaction. When the people will have sufficiently regained their equilibrium of mind, they will surely, with one heart, try their best to better their position and vie with the older Province in moral and material progress.

I believe my readers will agree with me that sufficient time has now elapsed since the creation of the new Province, to allow as to judge whether and to what extent the Mahommedan community has and will be benefitted by the partition. The Mahommedan population is the preponderating element in this Province, and this being the case, they are entitled to the first consideration of the Government. From the recent circular of the Chief Secretary to the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam it is evident that our case is now receiving that amount of consideration in the hands of the Government which it deserved. Government has now fully and clearly realised that an inadequate proportion of places in the gift of Government has fallen to the lot of the Mahommedans.... The separation has offered us many facilities which we did not possess before,... as I was a staunch advocate in favour of the separation, people might naturally think that I am apt to see nothing but good in it. No one can deny that the partition has roused the entire Mahommedan community of Eastern Bengal. Many poor Mahommedan youths who had graduated with honours, but were roaming about in search of suitable employment are now getting prize posts which they highly deserved. Poor parents who had lost heart on seeing that their educated youths not adequately provided for, have now taken courage and have decided to educate their dear little ones, knowing full well that justice will now be done to them.

There are many good things in store for us which will no doubt come to us by and by and the Mahommedans being the largest in number in the New Province, they have the largest share. I do not agree with such of my brother Mahommedans as accuse Government of wilfully neglecting the Mahommedans.... This is the golden opportunity which God and His Prophet have offered us, but if we do not now profit ourselves by the opportunity, we may not get another chance. Now or never, our destiny is in our hands. We must strike while the iron is hot.... We must learn to help ourselves. 'Heaven helps those who help themselves' is a well-known maxim.

Source: 'The New Province: Its Future Possibilities' by Hon'ble, the Nawab Bahadur Khawaja Salimullah C. S. I. of Dacca, *Journal of the Moslem Institute* (Quarterly), April-June 1906, Vol. I, No. 4.

57

LETTER FROM MOHAMMAD MUZAMILULLAH KHAN TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER

The political situation in the country has developed an ugly malignant phase, and the time has perhaps come when in the interest of peace, civilisation and humanity, there should be an anxious consideration of what it means and how the evil is to be combated. The resources of the Imperial Government to maintain order and to repress all forms of rowdyism and defence of constituted authority are no doubt great, and we may be sure the antics of the agitators can do no harm to the peaceful progress of the country so long as the hand that directs its affairs is strong and powerful. But there is also such a thing as the overcharging of the atmosphere with wild talk and pestilent agitation—a sort of nervousness in the body politic - and the steam thus generated must find an outlet. The Government may rest assured that in its endeavours to deal firmly and fearlessly with the situation it will earn the gratitude and even secure the voluntary cooperation of all those classes of the people who have the greatest stake in the country. They are anxiously waiting to see a firm assertion of the forces of law and order and will have a sigh of relief as soon as the lawful and' ultimate custodians of their interests afford them deliverance from an evil more nerve-racking than plague and calculated to take away all security for the realisation of their aspirations about the future well-being of their children, their race, and their country.

After taking a careful stock of the forces of loyalty one is glad to find how hollow are the pretensions of those who pose as representatives of the nation, and drag its name through the very mire. As an humble member of the Moslem community, I may be permitted to say on its behalf that the Mussulmans as a community have felt the greatest disgust and abhorrence at the mischievous propaganda of hate and rancour that has been preached by the apostles of 'Young India', the violence of their political feeling and its latest developments and manifestations. They (the Mussulmans) know well enough that their individuality as a nation and their steady rise in the scale of civilisation are bound up intimately with the existence of British rule. And, therefore, they can easily realise that any blow aimed at the roots of the present *regime* of liberty is indirectly aimed at their own organic progress and development. Their instincts, their traditions and their present interests have all alike rallied them on the side of the conservation of order, and they are ready to help the Government in maintaining the conditions of peaceful and ordered progress to the best of their ability. The sagacity and far-sighted vision of the late Sir Syed Ahmed had seen this all; and his warnings to Mussulmans to abstain from all political agitations, knowing well as he did the temperament of his co-religionists, have been amply justified by the sub-

sequent course of political events in this Country. It is a matter for the highest gratification that our Co-religionists in the Punjab have entered their most emphatic protest against the rowdyism that has been rampant in that province, and have dissociated themselves in a clear and unmistakable manner from men whose disgraceful methods and conduct have pushed back the political evolution of India for many years. I appeal to my co-religionists to make every effort in the cause of public order and tranquility. I must also appeal to my Hindu fellow subjects, to rise equal to the emergency of the situation, and strengthen the hands of the Government in the interests of the future welfare of their motherland and of generations yet unborn.

Sir, I am sure a large body of sane, sober and balanced Hindu opinion does condemn the ugly and abhorrent manner in which the agitators are manoeuvring for the usurpation of all political power and influence in this country. It cannot look on with equanimity at the ruthless efforts being made to tear up the existing organism of the society by the roots. Nay, even some of the gentlemen who devoutly subscribe to every article of the Congress creed must be very anxious to lay the ghost of unrest that they have conjured up themselves. Taking advantage of the fact that a philosopher—statesman—'a student of Burke and Mill'—was entrusted with the portfolio of the India Office, and encouraged by the good-natured yet misguided guides of India, like Sir. W. Wedderburn and Sir Henry Cotton, they set up a spurious agitation with a view to frighten a Radical House of Commons into yielding a number of substantial political concessions. But the strings have slipped out of the hands of the original wirepuller. The agitation that he so sedulously engineered in the first stage has given birth to a new voice uttering strange and militant accents, talking of blood and fire and breathing vengeance in every direction. Not he alone, but all India will have to...in a whirlwind the windy sowings of *his* past. There must be no wonder, indeed, if the proposed scheme for broadening the basis of popular representation submitted by H. E. Lord Minto (who alone is the sole author of the proposal as is well-known in the responsible (quarters) for the sanction of the Secretary of State is postponed for an indefinite period. There can be no doubt that the organic political development of the country has received a check. Will not the Government, in the interests of peace, civilisation and progress come to the rescue of this poor country and 'save it from its friends'? This alone is the question that is agitating the minds of many thoughtful Indians.

Source: The Pioneer, 18 May 1907.

58

BENGAL's PARTITION PETITION REJECTED BY JOHN MORLEY

My Lord—I have considered in Council the letter of Your Excellency's Government No. 3 dated the 28th February, last, enclosing memorials addressed to me (1) by Khwaja Atikullah of Dacca and certain other inhabitants of Bengal, and Eastern Bengal and Assam; and (2) certain Mahommedans inhabitants of the district Faridpur, in which they pray for a reconsideration of the orders regading the partition of Bengal.

Your Excellency in Council has no recommendation to make on behalf of the memorialists. I have examined in Council the representations made by the memorialists, but while I fully recognise that the recent change has been unwelcome to some of the classes affected by it, I am not impressed either by the facts or by the arguments now advanced. I accordingly request that the memorialists may be informed that I am unable to comply with their prayer. I cannot doubt that Your Excellency's Government will find the means to remove any substantial grievances that may be proved to exist, and I trust that with the loyal cooperation of the people the benefit anticipated when measure was sanctioned will in no long time be generally realised.—I have the honour to be, my Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 May 1907.

59

THE COMRADE ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE KING 1911 RESULTING IN THE REUNION OF BENGAL

I

When His Majesty the King Emperor declared his intention of announcing in person to his loving Indian subjects the event of his Coronation this year, it was felt throughout this country that a momentous action had been decided upon and it was difficult to exaggerate its sagacity and significance. Those who were privileged to witness the magnificent ceremony of the Imperial Durbar on the 12th December were so deeply impressed with it that, far from the least tinge of disappointment being detected, which is not an unusual experience of humanity in relation to events and sights long and

lovingly anticipated, the actual ceremony surpassed in its grandeur, variety and impressiveness all the expectations of the beholders. But little did those who beheld so unique a sight know how momentous was the occasion in reality, till they read the final announcement of His Majesty, copies of which were distributed only after the King and Queen had left the amphitheatre. It was then and then only that the tremendous changes, which were proposed by the Government of India nearly four months ago and sanctioned by the Secretary of State on the 1st November and the secret of which had been guarded so remarkably well that not even the Local Governments were aware of them before the actual announcement, became known to the assembled multitudes. Once out, the news travelled like wild fire and, while it occasioned both joy and sadness, the most predominant effect was the shock of surprise. An edict of the Emperor of China could not have been more sudden, a ukase of the Czar of all the Russias could not have been more despotic. Apart from the merits of the scheme, it may safely be said that the greatest of playwrights would envy the Government its artistic perception of dramatic effect. It is one of the disadvantages of constitutional government that the audience, who heard the momentous announcement, cannot for a time at least know how far the Imperial personage who uttered the words approved of their full significance. But we cannot conceive that the central figure of any pageant, no matter how glorious or full of serious import, could have desire to have a more portentous message delivered through him to a larger number of people than the one which His Majesty's advisers announced through him. But when all this is said, we have still to consider whether the message did not surpass in dramatic effect the solemn significance of the original purpose for which the august messenger had undertaken so long and arduous a journey. For our part we are constrained to say and we say it with immense regret that the announcement has killed the Durbar. Whether at the reception on the same evening the garden party on the following afternoon, the review on the 14th, or, later at the investiture, the general topic of conversation was not what was going on, but what had gone before. We cannot believe that this could have been intended, and yet we cannot conceive that the nine patriot kings, who have thus dramatically settled the destinies of millions with an impressive and imperial disregard of the existence of the rest of the world, could have failed to contemplate the effect of their choice of time and place. The position of a constitutional monarch is perhaps the most difficult that our modern political philosophy has created. The duties of such a king are enough to tax the power of any man to the full, but for the efficient performance of those onerous duties it is necessary that every word and act of the king's advisers should add to rather than militate against the dignity that should surround the king like an earthly halo. In our humble judgement, while the Government has not added to its own dignity by thus seeking shelter behind the Imperial robes, it has been guilty of doing damage to the dignity of the Monarch. Whatever it may be elsewhere, in

India the offence is unpardonable. But after all it shows how little the West understands the East even today.

As regards the importance of the scheme there can hardly be two opinions. The government of India regard it as 'one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of British Rule in India.' But when we come to consider the manner in which such a 'weighty decision' has been arrived at, we stand amazed at the audacity of the whole enterprise. There is no pretence of consulting public opinion, there is no reference to the assistance given by local Governments, to whose opinions so much deference is seemingly paid when the Government of India have made up their own mind to pass or reject a measure and the outlying provinces say Amen. When the question of giving Council Government to the United Provinces, which were then the second largest and are now the largest administrative unit, came up for discussion early this year in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, all debate was hushed because forsooth a masterful Lieutenant-Governor preferred his own unaided judgment to the opinion of the rest of mankind. Yet now the Capital of India is transferred to a thousand miles after a century and a half, two provinces are united, two others are cut up to form another local Government and a local Administration, a Lieutenant-Governorship is converted into a Governorship, a new province is given Council Government while the destinies of much older provinces are still in the hands of single individuals, and a smaller unit, which had been given representation in a Legislative Council, is wholly disfranchised. And the local Government so deeply affected knew no more of these tremendous and far-reaching changes than did the scarlet runners of the Supreme Government. It makes one doubt whether we are living in twentieth century under the aegis of the British Democracy or in the fourteenth under erratic Tughlak. If, in the words of the Earl or Crewe, this does not satisfy the historical sense of millions, we do not know what else would do. It will be said and it is being said unofficially that the discussion of 'so abrupt a departure from the traditions of British Government and so complete a dislocation of the official habits' would have caused endless agitation, but this is nothing else but a repetition of our grivance. If discussions and agitations are incongruous when changes of such great pith and moment are contemplated, we are asked to believe that the only subjects which the country can be trusted to discuss are wells and drains and smoky municipal lamps. The Government of India have in this instance not only choked public opinion for which in fact they have never had any superstitious respect, but have also strangled local Governments. And yet we do not know but that there may be a resurrection of the satrapies that are both dead and damned to-day, when at the touch of the new Messiah they may rise from their graves to kill Mr. Gokhale's Bill. We can well picture Sir Spencer Harcourt Butler standing up in the Legislative Council to quote reams of reports from local Governments as a counterblast to the unanimous opinion of the country

in favour of the Bill and suavely give it the quietus, after blessing it with almost convincing fervour.

As regards the merits of these measures, it would not have been possible to express an opinion so early, if they had really been as novel as they have been sudden in their reappearance. But, whatever else may be said for the Government of India, they cannot be complimented on the originality of their united judgment. There is hardly any aspect of the Partition question which has not been considered at one time or another; and the idea of the transfer of the Metropolis to Delhi is, in more senses than one, as old as the hills. We cannot hope to exhaust the discussion of the merits in a single article, and we do not know if any useful purpose could now be served by such a discussion. It is not arguments evidently that carry weight with the Government of India, but agitation, indicating 'bitterness of feeling', and that too only if it is 'very wide spread and unyielding.' If, however, the gods on Olympus can receive or need any consolation from the support of mere men, we may assure them that, irrespective of the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government of India, and taken each by itself as wholly unconnected schemes, we are ourselves in favour of both the schemes. We have already indicated our disapproval of the place and the procedure selected by the Government. As regards time, the partition in the form now approved was due in 1905, and the transfer of the Capital was needed in 1857. Half a century was allowed to lapse before so obvious a change as the latter was at last effected, and the vested interests that grow up in half a century cannot be brushed aside so lightly as this cavalier Government has done in its remarkable despatch. Considerations of space compel us to follow its example and say no more on the subject of these interests. But guilty as we shall appear of a somewhat unseemly frivolity in discussing so serious a question, we cannot help wondering what will become of that fateful enterprise of Lord Curzon, the Victoria Memorial. It will hardly fulfil its original purpose in Calcutta when Delhi again becomes the Capital of the Empire. Presuming of course that there are no engineering difficulties in the way of its erection, it could not bodily be carried to Delhi. Shall it then be left to its fate with the confident expectation that the temporising *Times* of London would write another ponderous leader to prove that the chief objects towards which Lord Curzon's masterful energy was directed in this instance 'had been fully safeguarded' ? To revert to the main question, we may conclude that in view of the many conveniences of Delhi and specially its vicinity to Simla, we are disposed to welcome the transfer of the Metropolis. Thanks to jute and tea and the existence of a tidal river, Calcutta cannot suffer much in importance as a whole, though the unfortunate rich, recently labelled as the 'pampered vampires' namely, the landlords, who have been hustled a good deal by the recent Improvement Trust Act, would lose considerably in rents of their house property. But if the change had to come, the sooner it came the better, and we cannot conceive that Calcutta could ever acquire the climatic and geogra-

phical advantages of Delhi, which alone could make it a satisfactory capital of the Empire. On the whole, therefore, the change is justified, though it must be remembered that it is not the geographical position alone of the capital that would bring the Government in closer touch with the people. As long as an Englishman is socially as an island, surrounded by a vast sea of aloofness and chilly conventions of the Arctic regions, the Capital of India would remain as inaccessible as ever to the people of India. But even while generally welcoming the transfer, we cannot accept as correct the political advantages enumerated by the Government of India in paragraph 6 of their despatch and tamely echoed in paragraph 3 of the despatch of the Secretary of State. To talk of 'sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history of Kurawas and Pandavas and of Indraprasta is to bolster up a useful enough scheme with sentiment that is of no avail in this connection, even if it is not too rickety and tawdry at the best of times. Nor has the Mahommedan any reason to feel 'unbounded gratifications' in seeing 'the ancient Capital of the Moghals restored to its proud position as the seat of Empire'. History never repeats itself, and restoration are impossibilities. It is not to the past that Mussulmans should be invited to look back but to contemplate a future, different no doubt but possibly not less glorious. What, however, strikes us as rather grotesque is the expectation that Mussulmans 'would presumably regard with satisfaction the re-erection of Delhi as the Capital of India', when not so very long ago the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma informed a Mussulman that efforts to erect a grave over the mortal remains of Bahadur Shah, which lay neglected in the compound of an Englishman's house in Rangoon, would be looked upon with disfavour by Government. We feel sure that the erection of a suitable grave at the cost of Government would be regarded by Mussulmans with greater satisfaction so far as mere sentiment goes than the re-erection of Delhi. The further assertion that the change 'would be accepted by all as the assertion of an unfaltering determination to maintain British Rule in India' seems to us to be little better than bombast and fustian. Nobody doubts for a moment the unfaltering determination of the British to maintain their rule in India; and to insist on its being indicated by so tremendous a change as to create a doubt when none existed before. It is not by clothing the obscure in the language of a Bardolph or an Owen Glendower that the obvious can be recommended to the suffrages of the people.

It is not possible to deal in this article with the question of the modification of the Partition; and unless the Government of India wish the world to know that it is only in the nature of a compensation to the sentiment of the Hindus of Bengal, and not an act justifiable on its own merits, we do not understand why the two questions should have been considered indissolubly linked together. We shall discuss the smaller and yet, in our view, the more farreaching decision of the modification in a later issue. In the meantime we may say that in the case of the Hindus of Bengal, or Bengalis as the Government of India's despatch chooses to call them, the announcement has been a

matter of give and take, that for 'sturdy loyal' Beharis it has been one of 'take' only, while for the Mussulman of Eastern it has been one of nothing but 'give'. We congratulate the Beharis on their signal good fortune and we rejoice as well as regret with the Bengalis. As for the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal, they must derive what cold comfort they can from the well-known lines :

Laugh, and the world laughs with you
Weep, and you weep alone.

After all they are only 'loyal and contented', and as a reward of their loyalty and contentment they have been given a generous helping of the humble pie. We pray that they may not have a too acute attack of indigestion.

II

Last week we criticised at some length the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government for carrying out two great schemes of far-reaching consequences, but indicated fairly clearly our general support of those measures taken each by itself as wholly unconnected schemes. The transfer of the Capital from Calcutta to Delhi is, we venture to think, a measure which would meet with unanimous approval, if we accept the vested interests of Calcutta which stand to lose considerably. The Hindus of Bengal are in a fix and no amount of florid manifestoes or torchlight processions can disguise the patent fact that to them the announcement is one of those peculiar morsels which can neither be swallowed nor thrown out. They have scored a victory in the modification of the Partition; but the victory has been gained at a cost which may in after times be found to be heavier than many a defeat. There are other vested interests also, such as those of the non-official European community of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, and we shall be much mistaken in, in spite of its many sermons to 'natives' on the evils of agitation and the virtues of moderation, it will not out-Herod Herod in condemning the transfer of the Capital. But India as a whole stands to gain by that measure and we hope to discuss later certain aspects of the transfer in greater detail.

To-day we intend to turn the searchlight towards the question of the Partition and its modification, though we cannot exhaust the subject in this article. We have held with a very large number of others, both Indians and Englishmen, that some kind of Partition was a crying necessity in 1905. But it has always been our belief that the most satisfactory arrangement was certainly not the one which Lord Curzon effected. Its greatest merit was that it freed a very large Moslem population in Eastern Bengal from the crushing yoke of Hindu domination, while it gave to the neglected half of Bengal a separate administration to look after its vital concerns. And we are constrained to say that, apart from the opposition of the monopolist to a reduction of his share of loaves and fishes, which would have been the consequences of any

reduction of the area of the monopoly, the Partition of 1905 met with an unparalleled hostility chiefly because the yoke was lifted from the sore necks of the Mussulmans. But it is undeniable that linguistic and ethnic considerations were entirely opposed to the form which Lord Curzon's Partition assumed, and this supplied to the opponents of any form of Partition a rational basis for hostility to the measures carried out by a despotic and somewhat vindictive Viceroy. Had the Partition come in 1905 in the form which it has taken in 1911, it would still have been opposed, no doubt; but it would then have been opposed much less vehemently and with not a shred of reasonableness. Administrative measures are not always essentially ethical in character, and the line of least resistence which the moralist must ignore should often commend itself to the practical administrator. Had Lord Curzon's Government followed those lines the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal would still have been to a great extent labouring under the same load as they had patiently borne so long. But we venture to think that by depriving the anti-partition agitation of its sole basis in fact, the Government would have also reduced the volume and force of that agitation. That Lord Curzon did not choose to do so was a blunder, and both the people and the Government have paid dearly for that blunder.

But it is not so easy to correct administrative blunders as it is to commit them. It is not always possible for Governments to sin in a hurry and repent at leisure. It will serve no useful purpose to discuss in greater detail what might have been. We, must, therefore, concentrate our attention on what has been, what is, and what should be. To-day the Government of India have issued a fiat that the old Partition should be annulled and a new one carried out. We have already dealt with the manner in which the Government have acted and we shall only add that in undoing the Partition of Lord Curzon they have adopted a despotic procedure from which even Lord Curzon would have shrunk. His Partition was carried out on the 16th October 1905; but he began his attempt to carry public opinion along with him in the middle of a heavy legislative session as early as in 1904. He found time for a tour through the districts most directly affected by his territorial redistribution. At Chittagong, at Dacca and at Mymensingh he gave exhaustive expositions of his measure. Even then public opinion attributed to Lord Curzon and Mr. Brodrick (now Lord Midleton)—and rightly so-a desire to rush through a far-reaching scheme of Partition. What is, then, one to say of the Government of Lord Hardinge and of the Marquis of Crewe, who never gave an opportunity to the public to have the least say in the matter, and have asked it to face another 'accomplished fact' in December, in a matter for the first time referred to the Secretary of State towards the end of September, and breathlessly accepted by him in November ? If this is not the homeopathy of despotism we know not what epithet to apply to it.

The Partition of Lord Curzon could have been rightly modified only

on either of two grounds. It could have been declared to have been unrighteous and inequitable in its motives of administratively unsound in its consequences. But, as we shall show later, neither of these contentions have been put forward by the Government or their feeble echo, the Secretary of State. It is true that the Government of India have haltingly attempted to show that the opposition was 'at first based mainly on sentimental grounds', but that 'since the enlargement of the Legislative Councils and especially of the representative element in them the grievance of the Bengalis has become much more real and tangible'. It is 'no longer a matter of mere sentiment' but 'one of undeniable reality'. We suppose the Government felt that they were required to produce some 'new fact' to upset the 'settled fact' before they could satisfy the conditions imposed on the Bengalis by Lord Morley, and in their search for that rarity discovered that only the enlargement of the legislatures could be passed into service if the 'bomb' had to be the scrupulously avoided. We heartily sympathise with the difficulties of the Government and are even prepared to say that it was not abject fear that mainly actuated them to modify Partition. But the last factor which could have entered into their calculations was the reforms. It is true that Lord Curzon could not have contemplated them; but, then, Lord Morley had them clearly at the back of his mind when he refused to touch the Partition even with a pair of tongs. Moreover, the reforms have not converted a majority into a minority or *vice versa*. When the Hindus of Bengal became minorities both in Eastern and Western Bengal, their influence became that of minorities, albeit educated, wealthy, solid and assertive minorities. The reforms only affected them so far as to make all representation direct as well as more extensive. If anything, the reforms provided safeguards for minorities of which the Hindus of Bengal could have availed themselves if they had chosen. The 'substantial grievance' of the Hindus of Bengal that as minorities they 'can never exercise in either province that influence to which they consider themselves entitled by reason of their numbers, wealth and culture' is one which is shared with them by Mussulmans in most other parts of India. In Sindh, for instance, the Mussulmans cannot exercise the influence to which their wealth and numbers entitle them, because they are yoked to the wholly dissimilar provinces of Guzerat and Deccan in the Bombay Presidency, and not joined to Baluchistan and Western Punjab, to which linguistic and ethnic affinity point as the proper yoke-fellows of Sindh. In short, there never was a question of equity and righteousness-to which we are told, no law of limitation is applicable so far as the Partition was concerned. But if there existed these supreme ethical considerations, then, we submit, that the time to pay heed to them was soon after the 5th of December 1905, when the Liberals came into power, even if the Unionists had passed them by on the 16th October of the same year. 'Honest John', who cared for these things, had succeeded Mr. St. John Brodrick, the heedless Gallio of the Unionists. The British Government could then

have re-considered the question in all its bearings, and could have soothed the qualms of conscience by stepping forward boldly and announcing that even if they had not always been as wise as Solomon and had sometimes blundered badly, they were honest enough and bold enough to confess their blunders and rectify them. Then all this waste of Indian money and official energy, all this Bengali agitation, and consequent anarchy would have been prevented. But then Lord Morley, although he did not share with Lord Curzon the belief that the 'inconvenient storm of public opinion' was machine, made and 'the work of political wire-pullers and political agitators', and although he was disposed to agree with those who thought that the Hindus of Bengal had in their minds 'a distinct feeling that they were going to suffer a great wrong and inconvenience', declared that the Partition could not be annulled or modified, and, in the words of the *Bengalee*, showed that it was immaterial whether Liberals or Conservatives were in power, that there was but one party which governs India in which all distinctions between Liberals and Conservatives and Unionists are merged– the party which will not re-consider a mistake, even if admitted as such, on the ground that it was a 'settled fact'. Our contemporary wrote at the time that 'to-day we stand in the unhappy position of having lost all faith in both political parties in England. If Mr. Morley can act so what may we not expect of others, of men who have never cared for principles in politics and who have made office the aim of their ambition ?' Would that we could assure our contemporary that the faith lost through a Morley has been restored at last—at long last—through a Crewe. It is not because the Partition of a Curzon was unjust and inequitable that the Partition of a Hardinge has been sanctioned by the same Liberal Government.

If not inequitable in its motive and design, has it been a failure in its consequences ? Unless we believe in a statement which is either too rebelliously original to be true or too platitudinous to be useful in practice, the Government do not acknowledge failure. By publishing a despatch obviously intended from the very beginning for public consumption in India rather than for converting a sceptical or unbelieving Secretary of State and Cabinet in England, the Government have deprived themselves not only of the chance of being glorified as intensely righteous, but also of an opportunity of establishing their courageous candour in confessing errors. There is not a word in the whole despatch about the financial embarrassment of the administration, the unsatisfactory result of yoking Assam with a part of Bengal, or about the difficulties of communication between the Rajshahi Division and Dacca. The Partition is acknowledged to have fulfilled 'two of the chief purposes which its authors had in view'.* It is stated to have relieved the over-burdened administration of Bengal and to have given 'the Mahommedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had perhaps hitherto not had their fair share.' But when a paragraph or two later, the Government of India come to 'sum up', they declare with the utmost boldness

that 'the results anticipated from the Partition have not been altogether realised.' That is a judgment which none but a despotic bureaucracy could have inferred from the premises that 'much good work has been done in Eastern Bengal and Assam' and that 'the Mahommedans of that province have reaped the benefit of a sympathetic administration closely in touch with them.' We fear we can see in this reversion and the reasoning that is expected to recommend it neither righteousness nor the saving grace of a sturdy commonsense.

What then has induced the Government to modify the Partition ? Is it fear ? One of the four indispensable requirement of a settlement which would be 'satisfactory and conclusive' is, according to the Government themselves, that it must be so clearly based upon broad grounds of political and administrative expendiency as to negative any presumption that it has been exacted by clamour or agitation. This is so obviously true that we would not have even referred to it had not the Government done their mighty best to disprove it themselves. How else is one to interpret para 9 of the despatch of the Government of India ? It says :

> Various circumstances have forced upon us the conviction that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition of Bengal is very widespread and unyielding, and that we are by no means at an end of the troubles which have followed upon that measure. Eastern Bengal and Assam has no doubt benefited greatly by the Partition and the Mahommedans of the province, who form a large majority of the population, are loyal and contented ; but the resentment amongst the Bengalis in both the provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs is as strong as ever, though somewhat less vocal.

Again, in para 13, the Government of India, referring to the Partition, state that

> It relieved the overburdened administration of Bengal, and it gave the Mahommedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had, parhaps hitherto not had their fair share. On the other hand, as we have already pointed out, it was deeply resented by the Bengalis.

In para 15 also the 'violent hostility' of the Bengalis is the dominant theme :

> Although much good work has been done in Eastern Bengal and Assam, and the Mahommedans of that province have reaped the benefit of a sympathetic administration closely in touch with them, those advantages have been in a great measure counterbalanced by the violent hostility which the Partition has aroused among the Bengalis.

In effect the Government wish us to believe that although the new province had benefited greatly from the Partition, and that justice was at last done to its Moslem population which is loyal and contented, all these advantages were sufficiently counterbalanced by 'the resentment among the

Bengalis', by 'the bitterness of feeling' which was 'very widespread and unyielding', and by their 'violent hostility', to have induced the Government to modify the Partition in the manner in which they have done. If these clear statements to the direct contrary are sufficient 'to negative any presumption that it has been exacted by clamour and agitation,' then surely words have lost their meaning or mankind has lost its senses. After all, the test of these things is not the convictions of the Government but what the people themselves believe, and if the Government wish to verify their own opinions and beliefs, they have not far to go. To use the immortal phrase of Lord Macaulay, which, however, has lost some of its force in these days in Bengal, 'every schoolboy knows' that it is 'clamour and agitation' that have exacted the modification of the Partition. It is impossible to convince any sane Indian to-day that 'clamour and agitation' do not pay in Indian politics. Some are even inclined to think that agitation gains rather than loses if it has a slight flavour of force, and, more for the sake of our own countrymen than of our Government, we trust that even if the main proposition is universally accepted, the mischievous rider would prove wholly unconvincing.

But whatever influence 'clamour and agitation' may have had, we are convinced that they do not form the main motive of the measure. For it is not the modification of the Partition but the transfer of the metropolis that has been mainly aimed at. For reasons which the Government of India have explained fairly and frankly, though not exhaustively, they decided to shift the Capital from Calcutta, and in order to do this with as little opposition from Bengal as possible they discovered in the modification of the Partition the necessary sugar-coating for a bitter pill. That fatal doctrine with which European foreign politics has familiarised us to the extent of downright moral contempt has, it seems, now peacefully penetrated itself into internal administration as well. It was the great Doctrine of Compensation which gave Morocco to France, and all but have Tripoli to Italy. To-day it gives the rescission of the Partition to Bengal. This is the full significance of the opening sentence of the Government of India's despatch, and the true explanation of the reasons why these 'two questions of great political moment' are in their opinion 'indissolubly linked together'. As His Majesty's announcement declares, it is only 'as a consequence of that transfer' that the Partition is modified. In para 7 of their despatch, the Government openly declared that the Bengalis 'should be reconciled to the change by other features of our scheme which are specially designed to give satisfaction to Bengali sentiment.' It is the 'proposal to make Delhi the future Capital of India' that is 'the keystone of the whole project', and in spite of all that is said about the widespread and unyielding bitterness of feeling in Bengal, the Government of India were not at all prepared to modify the Partition if Delhi was not made the capital. 'According as it is accepted or not our scheme must stand or fall.' In other words, the ideal partition is not like virtue its own reward, but only the price of a transfer of the Capital. The Marquis of Crewe is even franker, and in

para 7 of his despatch states openly that it is no more that 'the compensation which will be offered to Bengali sentiment' for 'the objections to the transfer which are likely to be entertained in some quarters.' The cat is at last out of the bag. But, then, why all this longdrawn sermon on the genesis and results of the Partition, and the sanctimonious talk of Bengalis 'labouring under a sense of real injustice which we believe it would be sound policy to remove without further delay ?' It is bad enough to treat the people as a pack of school children, but worse still to believe them to be fools as well.

Now, it is characteristic of the Doctrine of Compensation that it must be paid out of one's plenty but out of the bare necessaries of one's poorest neighbour. And India has been no exception to the rule. As Shelley had said, here, too,

> The weak one is singled
> To endure what it once possesset.

The Mussulman of Eastern Bengal, to whose claims we shall refer in detail in a later issue, were the only people who happened to be 'loyal and contented'. What could be easier than to politely disburden the loyal and contented Peter of his few worldly belongings in order to load the discontented if not disloyal Paul with rewards and compensations ? The Mussulmans have no Panther to send to Agadir, and it is too well-established a rule of diplomacy that no Panther, no compensation.

III

In dealing with the treatment of the Mussulmans of East Bengal last week, we had occasion to refer to the Doctrine of Compensation which seems to have travelled beyond the limits of foreign affairs and to have peacefully penetrated into internal administration. We had occasion to mention that the Mussulmans had no *Panther* to send to Agadir, and that it was too well-established a rule of diplomacy that no *Panther*, no compensation. Not that the Government are wholly callous. They have evidently not reached *that* stage yet. There are times when they believe they 'could not defraud the legitimate expectations of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal who form the bulk of the population of that province and who have been loyal to the British Government throughout the troubles' without exposing themselves to the charge of 'bad faith'. But while the charge of bad faith towards the Mussulmans is the skeleton in the cupboard, the Government of India have not been so indiscreet as to leave that dreadful receptacle unlocked. The charge of bad faith does not push them from their stools like the ghost of Banquo. They salve over their conscience with the comforting thoughts that 'the Mahommedan would still be in a position of approximate numerical equality with, or possibly of small superiority over the Hindus', that Dacca would be another Lucknow, the second capital of the new Governor-in-Council, and that 'the interests of the Mahommedans will be safeguarded by the special representation which

they enjoy in the Legislative Councils.

Now, as regards the first 'wooden spoon', surely the Government of India are not themselves, nor consider the Mussulman to be, so obtuse as to regard 'approximate numerical equality with, or possibly small superiority over, the Hindus' as the equivalent of a two-thirds majority ? They could not have forgotten that when the Government of the United Provinces proposed to increase Moslem representation in local bodies from a seventh to a fifth, every Hindu paper throughout India began a vigorous campaign against that Government and silenced the official batteries within a month. If a reduction of 7 per cent in the Hindu majority in local bodies of the United Provinces was a sufficient *casus belli*, surely the reduction of more than 14 per cent in the Moslem majority in the Provincial Council of United Bengal is large enough to disturb Moslem equanimity.

As regards the 'second Lucknow' argument, may not Dacca, which is more than 16 hours' journey from Calcutta and involves two changes, be a second Bankipore rather, which was after all only half that distance and still remained unvisited by the Lieutenant-Governor of Western Bengal. Moreover, one is not sure that an arrangement which would make the Government peripatetic as in the United Provinces would be an improvement on the cold neglect of Dacca in the good old days. In the United Provinces there is hardly any public opinion to control, or at least guide, the bureaucracy, and it is our conviction that this is so partly because the United Provinces have a locomotive administration.

There is still the sheet-anchor of the Government, the separate representation of the Mussulmans. With the redistribution of the areas nobody knows what new proportion Moslem representation may assume in Bengal, and a bird in hand is generally worth several in a bush. But even assuming that this safeguard is adequate, could it not have protected so wealthy and cultured a minority as the Hindus of Bengal ? Why did not the Government assure them that even if they were 'labouring under a sense of real injustice' it could have been removed by their utilising the safeguards of the minorities even better than by a modification of the Partition ? As a matter of fact, as we shall show later, the Hindus of Bengal have been amply protected in both the Councils of divided Bengal. But there is still another and a greater consideration. Who can now be persuaded that Lord Minto's Separate Representation will not follow Lord Curzon's Partition on the primrose way to the ever-lasting bonfire ? The Government of Lord Hardinge have given their pledge no doubt; but then Lord Minto had pledged still more clearly and solemnly that separate and adequate representation would be accorded to the Mussulmans in local bodies as well. More than five years have passed and the pledge is still unredeemed, But why need we go so far ? Was not the Partition of Bengal to be looked upon as a 'settled fact' ? When another Liberal M.P. said the democracy was entirely opposed to and would resist the doctrine of the settled fact, what was it that the great Liberal, Lord Morley, told us ? He said in the

House of Commons :

Now if that be so, I am very sorry for democracy. I do not agree with my hon. friend. I think democracy will be just as reasonable as any other sensible form of Government, and I do not believe democracy will for a moment think that you are to rip up a settlement of an administrative or constiutional question because it jars with some abstract *a priori* idea. I for one certainly say that I would not remain at the India Office or any other powerful responsible departmental office, on condition that I made short work of settled facts, hurried on with my catalogue of first principles, and arranged on those principles the whole duties of Government.

This was what Lord Morley had pledged himself to less than four years ago. But what a mockery are those words to-day. Remember, it is not only this that democracy has ripped up the settlement of an administrative question while the Liberals are still in power, and Lord Morley, if not at the India Office, still holds a powerful and responsible office in the Cabinet. There is something far more unsettling than the ripping up of a settled fact. It is the platitude of the Government of India that Government schemes 'could only be justified by success', and the revolutionary doctrine that success significance nothing more or less than the satisfaction of those that know how to clamour and agitate. In the light of these two doctrines is there any pledge that can be considered sacred ? That which assured the Mussulman about their separate representation certainly cannot. Whosoever may regard separate Moslem representation as a settled fact, those at any rate who opposed the Partition do not regard it as such. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar had exhausted the resources of polemics last Easter at Bareilly in opposing that safeguard of minorities and more than anything else it was the vigour of that attack which cleared the way for his leadership of this year's Congress. The same old arguments are repeated in his Presidential Address that have resounded from other political platforms, while all arguments that go to show why a defenceless minority was forced to apply for a partition of the franchise are ignored in the approved way of the Congress. We think we had dealt adequately with Mr. Dar after Easter, and whatever may be his feelings after Christians, we must confess, we have no heart to go over the old ground once more. All that we need say here is that he claims that the principle of communal representation has been 'denounced by the whole country', that its approval only by, a section of the Mahommedans is supported by their interpreting 'a certain passage in Lord Minto's speech to the All-India Mahommedan deputation in their own way', that 'injustice was done to the Hindus but they remained quiet', that the arguments favouring a modification of the fallacious test of numbers in politics have been 'tricked out in costume of shame history', that 'history is like the child's box of the letters of alphabet which you may arrange in any way', that 'the Hindus will never tolerate' such arguments, that 'they shall never rest contented so long as that humiliation is not removed', that 'Mr.

(now Sir Lewis) Jenkins, the Home Member, perpetuated a cynical joke at their expense when to Mr. Malaviya's Resolution he replied that before Government could undertake to correct the disproportionate representation of Mahommedans, the Hindus must first convert the Mahommedans to their view', and that 'it is official pronouncements like this which compromise the strict equity of British rule'. One can see that the clamour and the agitation are there just the same. So also is 'the growing estrangement' between Hindus and Mussulmans for which the Government of India have shown a refreshing concern in their despatch. Only the customary symptoms of 'a very widespread and unyielding bitterness of feeling' against the Government are apparently required to make the Government rip up another settlement.

It is undeniable that the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal laboured under many difficulties before the partition was carried out. They were for the most part the descendants of the depressed classes of Hindus, and although Islam had improved their social status, their conversion had added to the ignominy of the low-caste the reproach of the renegade. They were also tenants and wage-earning labourers, and that too, in a permanently settled area. Above all, they were ignorant and helpless. Yet they endured all this quietly and as only the weakest of the weak can endure. It was not they who had clamoured and agitated for the Partition. But the Partition came to them as a well-deserved though wholly unexpected blessing. Their condition began to improve and with that their ambitions and hopes. It may even be confessed that like all *noveaux riches*, these political *parvenus* sometimes held their heads too high and strutted about in the peacock vein. But like the exaltation born of a draught of haschish, it did not last long, and the reaction has come with a suddenness that is terrible. The emancipated slaves are once more sold into bondage, and who does not know that revenge is sweet ? Their old masters who are once more in the position of the slave-driver will be more than human if they do not use the lash and the bastinado a little lavishly. And this is the boon which the Government of India have in their unaided judgment and with a full throated laudation of their generosity conferred on the 'loyal and contented Mussulmans'. Well could they have said with the poet, in anticipation of this boon : (Let us see what boons the lovers receive from the idols of their affections. A Brahman has declared that this would be an auspicious year !)

The questions are what should the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal do at this juncture, and what should the Government do to break their fall ? We have considered in the course of the last three weeks every advice that has been offered to the Mussulmans, and we may add that we ourselves have not escaped those impulses of the moment to which the announcement gave rise. We trust we shall be charged neither with sycophancy nor with callousness for the wrongs of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal if in adding our own counsel to those of others we declare that in our judgment the Mussulmans should accept the decision of the Government. But while this is our advice

to the Mussulmans, we cannot conceal the fact that it is the Government of India that stand more in need of friendly counsel than the people whom they have apparently ignored. They must temper the wind to the shorn lamb. It is not enough to secure to the Mussulmans a majority of about two millions in a population of 42 millions. Even to-day in the Provincial Council of Western Bengal there are only 6 Mussulmans out of 32 non-officials, and 4 of these owe their seats to the separate electorates which Mr. Bishan Narayan Dar would regard merely as a cynical joke of the Government. From Bengal itself only two Mussulmans were elected, as against 11 non-Moslems, and in the Government nominations too the 'favourite wife' failed to secure even a single seat, while the termagant obtained three, including the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, who is a host in himself. One would have thought that in Eastern Bengal at least the Moslem majority would assert itself. But the Mussulmans number no more than 8 out of 24 non-officials in the Council of that Province. Of these 4 owe their seats to the separate electorates, which on paper ought not to have been necessary to protect a 66 per cent majority and two Mussalmans of the influence of Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur and Nawab Syed Nawab Ali have come in through the back door of nomination. Taking both these Councils together, we find that out of 44 elected members, only 12 are Mahommedans, 8 of whom owe their seats to separate electorates, and that out of 12 nominated non-officials only two are Mussulmans. Thus, out of an aggregate of 56 non-elected or nominated, the Mussulmans number 14, or a mere fourth.

When the area represented by these 56 members is redistributed we doubt whether the Mussulmans of the new Province of Bihar would secure an average of four Mussulmans to eight Hindus which they have now obtained. But, howsoever Bihar Mussalmans may fare, those of the two portions of Bengal will find it impossible to secure more than the 10 seats that they now possess out of a total of 40 non-officials, as against 21 Hindus. It must be remembered that all that the Government promise to the Mussulmans in Bengal is 'a position of approximate numerical equality with, or possibly of small superiority over, the Hindus'. It is only the re-grouping of the population that will take place and nothing more. Following the lines of that re-grouping, we find that, other things remaining the same, the Mussulmans of Bengal, in spite of their approximate numerical equality with, or possibly a small superiority over, the Hindus, will secure no more than a 25 per cent representation in the Legislative Council of re-united Bengal. As regards the Imperial Council, Bihar has now one Hindu and one Muslim, and the two Bengals three Hindus and three Mussulmans. But it must be remembered that the Hon. Mr. Ghuznavi owes his seat to the spin of the coin. In the ordinary course, therefore, Bengal Mussulmans can expect at the present ratio no higher a ratio of representation than 7 to 9, and this after the Moslem interests are safeguarded to some extent by the separate Moslem electorates existing side by side with joint territorial electorates.

It will be premature at this stage to suggest details of any future rearrangement, but we think we shall not be asking too much for the Mussulmans if we demanded some security both in the Provincial and the Imperial Legislatures the Mussulmans will for a certainty have a few seats more than those that may fall to the Hindus, and this chiefly by election. We may only add that this will never be possible without the introduction of the principle of separate communal electorates in local bodies. If superior wealth and education count for anything in the struggle for supremacy, a 50 per cent representation will afford to the Hindus of Bengal a good enough opportunity of making their influence felt. After all, when the Hindus of Bengal numbered no more than a fourth of the total population of the old undivided Province, they could not only lord it over the Mussulmans of the Province but also crush the Hindus of Bihar, Orissa, and Chhota Nagpur. With their present wealth and education they should be the last to grumble if the possible Mussulman majority gets an equality of representation with them.

The second necessary safeguard is that for all posts in the gift of the Government of Bengal a minimum qualification should be fixed, and so long as the numerical proportion of the Mussulmans is not exhausted none but Mussulmans with the fixed minimum qualification should be employed. If Mussulmans with such qualifications are not available within the limits of the Province, they should be imported from the neighbouring provinces. Unless this is done it will be impossible to destroy the Upas tree of the monopolist under which no other vegetation has yet prospered. Similarly, the Indian member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal should alternately be Moslem and Hindu. It is no secret that a Mahommedan official of Bengal of considerable talents had to be thrust back because another Mahommedan of Bengal had been selected for a still higher appointment. This shows that it is not necessarily the best man that is always selected. In view of the fact that all the three appointments to the Provincial Executive Councils were those of Hindus, the new post in Bihar and the first vacancy in Bengal should go to Mussulmans.

We must admit that this looks like seeking shelter behind the Government when all communities should learn to put their trust in themselves. But it is our belief that taking their historical position into consideration, Mussulmans in Bengal, as in the North, have not had an equal opportunity with other communities. They were allowed to waste their energies in a vain endeavour to find sustenance out of the dry bones of some of their ancient learning to the absolute neglect of modern studies, and, what is far more important modern methods of study. The Madrasah system of Bengal is a standing reproach to the indifference and neglect of Government, and we see no hope for the Mussulmans if this system is allowed to continue. The least that the Government should do at this juncture is to open a first grade modern residential College for the Mussulmans at Calcutta and another at Dacca,

which should be worked on the lines of Aligarh. The Durbar grant of 50 lakhs for education, taken together with the Opium windfall of la styear some of which is earmarked for the same purpose, cannot be too small an allotment to permit the erection of such Colleges. What strict equity demands is that for the next thirty years at least the educational budget of the Mussalmans should separate and a *pro rata* allotment should be made for Moslem and Hindu primary, secondary and collegiate education, for girls as well as for boys. It is manifestly unjust that the number of Mussulman students that are admitted into the Presidency College at Calcutta should be strictly and even ungenerously limited when the Mussulmans have no College such as the Hindu College exclusively for their use. Nor is it equitable that liberal aid should be denied or delayed to girls' schools opened by Mahommedans on the plea that there is no saving in the Budget on account of the growing requirements of the Bethune College which is practically of as little use to Moslem ladies as Girton or Lady Margaret's Hall. We remember a cartoon in a Bombay paper depicting the Governor of Bombay as informing a Moslem politician dressed like a boy that he must first climb up the ladder of education before he could reach desirable toys such as high Government appointments. There certainly was not much humour in this cartoon as it was originally conceived, but it has amply been supplied by the Government of more than one Province which has left the toys on the high shelf, but has removed the ladder. And of no Government is this truer than of the Government of Bengal which reserves most of its niggardliness for its friends and so-called favourites. If the Government of India and the Secretary sincerely desire to see the Mussulmans qualifying themselves for the high offices and the representation on Councils to which their numbers entitle them, they will have to demand from the Local Government an annual report about the progress of Moslem Education in Bengal, and a more careful attention on the part of the Bengal Government to the programme of reform prepared by the Mahommedan Educational Conference. The Department of Public Instruction has taken the high road all these years. Is it not time to take the lower road pointed out by the Mussulmans themselves and to see if that would take them to Scotland any earlier ?

But it is essential that all these concessions should be announced immediately and that the announcement should come from His Majesty himself. The Government must have learnt from the agitation against the Partition the lesson that the longer a wrong, real or supposed, remains unredressed the more difficult becomes the redress. It will be no statesmanship to delay an obvious act of justice so long that agitation on a colossal scale is commenced, and while much bad blood is needlessly created, all grace is removed from the act of righting the wrong. He who gives at once gives twice, and we trust the Government will give at once. The mere fact the Mussulmans of Bengal retain an insignificant and unfructuous majority instead of a majority of two-thirds in Eastern Bengal will not certainly allay

their rising discontent. Nor what we have suggested as balancing concessions can be called 'adventitious assistance'. At any rate, it is idle to expect that the restoration of Delhi which not only 'the ancient capital of the Moghals' but is also 'intimately associated in the minds of the Hindus with sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history', as the Government of India rightly remind us—would itself be regarded as sufficient boon to the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal 'in common with others of their faith' to make them forget the primary consideration, which is concerned with 'the local aspect of the proposals'. A perusal of the despatches makes us conscious of the fact that neither the Government of India nor the Secretary of State regard in their heart of hearts the absence of all compensation to the 'loyal and contented Mussulmans' as a satisfactory feature of their great scheme. But if it is not merely an unfructous sentiment, we are confident that our suggestions would supply to the Government just those complimentary concessions which would thoroughly justify Lord Crew's proud boast that 'regarding it as a whole, and appreciating the balance sought to be maintained between the different races, classes, and interests likely to be affected, I cannot recall in history, nor can I picture in any portion of the civilized world as it now exists, a series of administrative changes of so wide a scope, culminating in the transfer of the main seat of Government, carried out, as I believe the future will prove, with so little detriment to any class of the community, while satisfying the historical sense of millions, aiding the general work of Government, and removing the deeply felt grievance of many.' But, on the contrary, if the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal are left with a nominal majority, friendless and unprotected, it will not be possible to discover in history a more ignoble instance of rewarding loyalty with deprivation of recently recovered rights and punishing contentment as the worst of crimes.

Source : The Comrade, 16, 23, 30 December 1911.

60

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE MEETINGS OF THE ANJUMAN-E-ISLAMIA

The following resolution was adopted at a meeting held at Manikganj on the 10th instant :

'Since Islam preaches loyalty to the Sovereign and loyalty consists in implicit obedience to his will, resolved that not even a feeble voice be raised against the announcement of His Imperial Majesty regarding the partition,

fatal though it is to our cause; but that His Excellency the Governor-General may be approached by our leaders and impressed with the justice of our demand for the removal of our grievances.'

At a large and representative meeting of Mahommedans of Feni held on the 9th instant the following resolution was unanimously adopted :

'The heart-rending news of the modification of the partition of Bengal was received by the Anjuman with a considerable amount of disappointment and despair, but our Islamic loyal feeling dictates to us to accept the announcement of His Imperial Majesty, which is considered to be irrevocable. The injury done to our cause, however, necessitates our leaders to move the Supreme Government to favourably consider our critical situation and safeguard our interests.'

The following resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Gribandha Mahommedan Association held on the 10th instant :

'That the Mahommedans of this part have received the proclamation of His Imperial Majesty modifying the Partition of Bengal with grave concern and demands acquiescence, and they therefore accept it, while they consider it high time, since this administrative change seems prejudicial to their interests, that their leaders lay bare the situation to His Excellency the Governor-General and do all they can to protect Mahommmedan interests.'

Source : The Comrade, 13 January 1912.

61

LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL NATIONAL MAHOMMEDAN ASSOCIATION TO THE VICEROY

24 January 1912

'The committee feel that they would be ill discharging their duty to the Mussulman community, whose wants, feelings and opinion they have humbly striven faithfully to represent to the authorities for the last thirty-five years and also to the Government whose permanent and beneficent stability they recognise as essential not only for the protection of Islamic interests but for the peaceful progress of India, if they failed at this critical juncture in the history of the Muslim fate in Bengal to bring to the notice of the Government that in consequence of the modification of the Partition a feeling of widespread apprehension pervades the Mahommedan community that their interests especially in Eastern Bengal may be injuriously affected unless definite safeguards in respect of certain matters are at once adopted. It were idle for

the committee to take up old controversie on the subject of the Partition or to refer to the great sacrifices Mussulmans have to make in not joining the anti-partition movement and in loyally standing by the Government during the storm and stress of recent years or to dilate on the assurances by His Excellency Lord Curzon's Government that Mahommedan interests would be safeguarded by the Partition, as these are matters which admit of no controversy and are in a manner echoed in the recent Government despatch on the subject of the territorial changes in India. It is true that at first this association in Lord Curzon's time, when asked for an expression of opinion on the question of Partition thought fit to raise its voice against the contemplated partition, but subsequently acquiesced in it on the strength of the assurances subsequently given by His Excellency Lord Curzon's Government regarding the protection of Muslim interests and as a matter of fact the committee find that Muslim interests in East Bengal have been adequately safeguarded, nay advanced, by the Partition.'

The despatch of the Government of India annulling the partition is then quoted in support of this view and the commitee ask that this safeguarding shall be continued. They submit five proposals among which are that half the Indian members on the Governor's Legislative Council shall be Mahommedans, that the Indian members on the Governor's Executive Council should be one Hindu and one Mahommedan. If this be found unfeasible, the appointment should go alternately to a Hindu and to a Mahommedan. That on district boards, local boards, and municipalities the numbers of the Hindu and Muslim representatives should always be in proportion to the numerical strength of the Mahommedan and Hindu populations respectively in each district and sub-division and municipality. That the distribution of State patronage in all departments and offices for the whole presidency of Bengal should be regulated by the same standard of numerical population and half of the appointments open to Indians should be allotted to Mussulmans and half to Hindus. A standard of an irreducible minimum qualification should be laid down and so long as Mussulmans satisfy this standard they should be employed in proportion to the numerical strength.

The Committee further propose that the allotments of provincial grants for education in Bengal should be separately made in equal shares for Hindus and Mahommedans respectively. As matters now stand the bulk of the provincial grant goes year after year towards the education of Hindus by reason of their preponderating influence in public affairs. Finally as regards the district board and the municipal allotment for education, the Committee desire that it should be divided amongst Hindus and Mahommedans according to their respective numerical proportions in each district and under each municipality.

The letter closes as follows : 'The committee feel assured that His Excellency would not willingly allow the loyal Mussulman community in Bengal by reason of the modification of the partition to relapse into an unhealthy condition of decadence, depression and despair, a condition which

would be injurious to the community and far from conducive to the interests of the Empire. The committee venture to think that should their prayers be granted by His Excellency a great and loyal community with historic traditions will, despite the modification of the Partition, be afforded a fair field for peaceful advancement and progress side by side with the great Hindu community under the aegis of the beneficent British Crown and will never cease to bless His Excellency for dealing fairly, wisely and legitimately with Mussulman claims.'

Source : The Pioneer, 25 January 1912.

62

AGA KHAN ON THE CHANGES (IN BENGAL)

The recent changes came so suddenly that it is not strange that the Mussulman public should have hesitated in deciding how it should receive them. That they will have considerable effect on Islam's future destiny in India is an evident truism. Yet I doubt if there be a single individual, outside the small circle of the authors of these changes, who has not passed through different emotions since he heard the royal announcement.

I, for one, however, after a careful consideration of every aspect of the question, have come to the conclusion that the Mussulmans do not lose anything of consequence, while India as a whole and the Empire will gain considerably. The gain of India must be the gain of the Mussulmans of India, provided no direct Moslem interest is attacked. We must take the changes *seriatim*, look at their probable results, and determine how India, and then the Mussulmans of India, will we benefited, or otherwise, by each. The change of capital in itself will have the great advantage for Mussulmans of bringing the Government of India nearer to the centres of Moslem intellectual activity and to the most virile portions of the Moslem community in India. It will, in the next place, bring the Viceroy nearer to the Moslem University, an institution in the welfare of which as the Chancellor of the University he is directly interested. For India as a whole it will be a great gain that the seat of Government should be, so to speak, in a neutral central position, and removed from any great section of people or province that may have interests of its own not identical with or always friendly to those of other equally great and important sections of people or provinces. For Calcutta, with its great commerce, and tapping as it does the richest 'Hinterland' of Southern Asia, it cannot be anything more than the loss of the social attractions of Government House.

Then comes the undoing of the Partition. No doubt the Mussulmans were in a distinct majority in the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and this unique position is now lost. But looking at the position of Islam in India as a whole, I doubt if it will be found that it was a good thing to be in a clear majority in one province and a minority in almost every other. The disadvantages of such a situation are obvious. Islam in India is one and indivisible. It is the duty of a Moslem to look not only to the immediate interests of his own locality but to those of his co-religionists as a whole. But if we look upon it from a still wider point of view as Indians, we shall find that the old Partition had deeply wounded, and not unnaturally, the sentiments of the great Bengali-speaking millions of India. Anything that permanently alienates and offends the sentiments or interests of millions of Indians, be they Moslem or Hindu, is undoubtedly in itself an undesirable thing and should not only be avoided by the Government but also opposed by all communities of India. Viewed in this light, the undoing of the Partition which as satisfied the great Bengali-speaking people ought to be in itself a cause of congratulation for all Indians, whether Hindus or Mussulmans, and I think we should all be deeply grateful to His Excellency Lord Hardinge for this great act of statesmanship which has removed a grievance from one important section of His Majesty's Indian subject. From the point of view of the greater good of India and the Empire, the removal of the capital and the undoing of the Partition, or, rather, the creation of two new provinces, have been masterstrokes of statesmanship.

But there still remains the question of the real needs of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal and Assam. These needs can all be summed up in one word—'education'. However, since Lord Hardinge's Government has promised a University for Dacca—a University that we m st sincerely hope will be a teaching and residential one—I doubt if there is left upredressed any real grievance of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal, provided, of course, that the new Government of Bengal sees to it that the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1882 are carried out both in the spirit and the letter. For with facilities for education provided in the province, the Mussulmans can raise themselves to a position in which it will be impossible for anyone to deprive them of what is rightly their due. Some have no doubt asserted that the new University will perhaps complete with the great Moslem University at Aligarh. Nothing could be more absured. For the great Moslem University is to be a central residential institution for the elite of the community, while the other is to help forward all those who might be left behind in the race of life by the supersession of Dacca by Calcutta. Competition between two such different institutions would be as absurd as a race between a bird and a fish. Calcutta and India as a whole will also gain educationally, for no university can be really efficient that has to cater for a population of over 100 millions and rush through more than 8,000 examination It must necessarily become mechanical.

So resuming the facts, we can put the gains as a neutral and central capital, the satisfaction of the sentimental grievance of the great Bengali nation, and the protection of the only real interest of the Moslems of Eastern Bengal. The loss comes to be limited to the loss of the social importance of Calcutta, but neither the loss of its trade nor of its prosperity.

Under these circumstances, I feel it my undoubted duty to advise my co-religionists to welcome the changes and be grateful to the Government that has initiated them. The need for this is all the greater since the Mussulmans will thus show their real and sincere sympathy with their Hindu brethren of Bengal and their readiness to respect Hindu and Bengali sentiment. Are not the feelings animating the promoters of the Hindu and Moslem University schemes those of fraternal and healthy rivalry ? And above all, by working for the success of these great changes loyally, wholeheartedly and without any *arriere pensęes*, Moslems will best prove their loyal devotion to their gracious and beloved Sovereign, the King-Emperor, and their loyal appreciation of the sympathetic Government of Lord Hardinge that has removed the great sentimental grievance of the Bengalis and has yet protected, by promising a University at Dacca, all the real interests of the Moslems of Eastern Bengal.

Source : The Comrade, 10 February 1912.

63

LORD MACDONNEL OF SWINFORD ON PARTITION OF BENGAL

22 February 1912

My Lords, I now come to the other part of the scheme connected with Bengal. The noble Earl said yesterday, or at least I understood him to say, that his policy in regard to Eastern Bengal was determined by two considerations—the consideration of giving to the Mahommedans a unity which they had not had since Mahommedan rule, and naturally and consequently predominance in that part of the country; and, next, the consideration that it was necessary to remove the scandal of ineffective administration of Eastern Bengal. I hope I do not mistake the two points of the noble Earl's policy. The Partition of Bengal as carried out by the noble Earl conferred political predominance on the Mahommedans in Eastern Bengal. That, my Lords, was the first time in the history of Anglo-Indian Civil administration, so far as I know, in which—I trust the noble Earl will pardon the word, I use it in no offensive sense—partisanship has been manifested by the Government of India in dealing with our subject races. My Lords, the manifestation of that spirit by

Government of India is, in my opinion, very dangerous. Antagonism between Mahommedans and Hindus is one of the most fundamental and serious difficulties we have to contend with in India, and the creation of a Province with the special object of giving there in predominance to the Mahommedans in a country which was essentially a Hindu country, in which the great landholders are nearly all Hindus, was calculated to produce throughout the whole of Eastern Bengal that particular difficulty which Indian Governments are most desirous to avoid. In view of these considerations I am not surprised that now the Government of India, in their Despatch of August, speak of 'the growing estrangement, which has now, unfortunately, assumed a very serious character in many parts of the country, between Mahommedans and Hindus.'

Nobody admires the true Indian Mahommedan more than I do. Those Mahommedans who came from Central Asia and established themselves in Upper India have left behind them memorials which the modern world regard with wonder and admiration. Among the men of that race are to be found the most loyal subjects and the staunchest supporters of our rule in India. For the last six years of my official life I lived among them and was on friendly terms with nearly all of them of any importance in my Province. They are men with whom the European may be on terms of social intercourse, whom you may invite to your table and from whom you may accept invitations to theirs. To this day I am in friendly correspondence with many Mahommedan gentlemen of that class. But who are the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal ? Are they the descendants of the invaders who came into Upper India under a Mahmud, a Zenghis or Timour ? By no means. They are the aboriginal inhabitants of Eastern Bengal who, after the Mahommedan invasion in the thirteenth century, willingly accepted the Mahommedan creed which, proclaiming the Unity of God and the equality of man, had peculiar attractions to people outside the pale of Hinduism. From that time up to our conquest of Bengal these men lived among their Hindu neighbours, undistinguishable from them so far as historical records show. At all events, when we took possession of Bengal towards the end of the eighteenth century we found them but little distinguished from their Bengali neighbours except for formal profession of creed. Then came that wave of Wahabi puritanism from Arabia, which in time was spread in Eastern Bengal by emisaries preaching that India was the country of the Infidel and not of the true believer and that the Holy War was obligatory. The loyalty of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal was undermined, and in time it became a prolific recruiting ground for the rebel colonies of Mulka and Sitana which were established on the North-Western frontier. It took three campaigns to reduce them, as the noble and gallant Field-Marshal on the Cross Benches can tell you. Those campaigns were followed by long drawn-out prosecutions, which I myself remember, in the seventies of the last century.

My Lords, I lived among the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal for three years and got to like them, for although they are fanatical they are a fine

body of men, a hard-working independent race, but among the most ignorant people of this class I met with in the whole of my Indian career. I agree with the noble Earl that education has not been extended among these people as much as it ought to have been. After the prosecutions to which I have referred, that great man Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, of Aligarh, devoted himself to promoting Mahommedan education, and the College at Aligarh has been the result. It will, I am glad to say, soon be expanded into a Mahommedan University, from which there is a great hope for Mahommedan progress. But it will not operate on the Feraizis of East Bengal. Yet these are the men who were given political predominance over the clever and intellectual Hindus by the Partition. I think that such a policy if it had not been reversed was destined to be productive of the most injurious consequences to our rule in India.

Source: Parliamentary Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. XI, 14 February to 16 May 1912, 209–11.

64

THE COMRADE ON 'THE AGA KHAN ON THE RECENT CHANGES'

We have no doubt that the views of His Highness the Aga Khan on the recent changes, which we were happy to publish else-where, will be read with that attention and command that respect which his intellectual gifts no less than his unique position have earned for them through a brilliant public career in recent times. Those who come in contact with His Highness cannot fail to be impressed by his breadth of view and intellectual charm which remind one in a manner of Lord Roseberry. They are a good corrective of the narrowing tendencies of party politics and journalistic polemics and it will be difficult to overrate their value.

We would earnestly commend to the Mussulmans his view, that 'the gain of India must be the gain of the Mussulmans, provided no direct Moslem interest is attacked.' This is, of course, nothing new, but in the heat of controversy a truism is only too often neglected as obsolete and old-fashioned. On the other hand, we would like other communities also to remember that the gain of the Mussulmans is not the loss of India unless some great and universal interest of the country is thereby sacrificed. Where people are apt to be misled by party prejudice or ignorance of reality is that what is claimed for the nation so often becomes, when achieved, the privilege of a few or the private prerequisite of a caste. We trust the magnanimity of the Aga Khan's view that the satisfaction 'of the great Bengali-speaking people ought to be in itself a cause of congratulation for all Indians, whether Hindus or Mussulmans'

would be appreciated throughout the country and hasten that unity which every friend of this country must whole-heartedly desire. It may, no doubt, be said that minorities can ill afford to be too magnanimous. But it must also be remembered that it is only the poor that are really charitable, and if the Mussulmans give the first proof of a noble spirit, so much the more creditable to them. But we would insist that there should be no sham charity, no cant of magnanimity, but the genuine article itself. The Mussulmans must show, not once nor twice, but frequently, that they make no virtue of necessity, and are sincerely and without secret reservations prepared to go a long way to meet the Hindus. If they cannot find it in their heart to do so, they shall not only be sacrificing sincerity, but also depriving themselves of the dignity which a community such as theirs must greatly prize.

As regards the recent changes, we have never disguised our strong disapproval of the procedure adopted by Government. Much can undoubtedly be said on behalf of the Government, but more can be said against them. The times are gone when everything could safely be done for the people and nothing by them. With the increase of education the self-confidence of the people has also increased, and the spirit of the Arab saying : (We are men and they are men), is the spirit not only of the non-official European community, but of educated Indians as well. The progress of social and political intercourse, in spite of its snail's pace, has increased the friendliness of the people towards their rulers. But increased familiarity has robbed the latter of much of their superstitious solemnity and public men are no longer content to say with Hafiz :

(Rulers alone understand the affairs of their dominions). Government is no longer an Isis hid by the veil, although the loss of a dreadful divinity is more than made up by the gain of humanity. We believe that the financial interests of Government could have been protected even otherwise than by the secrecy observed by the authors of the change of Capital, and the argument that a public discussion of the changes would have given rise to endless controversy betrays a disproportionate assessment of the dangers of controversy and of the value of the cooperation of the rulers and the ruled. But whatever may be said for the Government's procedure regarding the changes announced at Delhi, there is not a vestige of argument in favour of the secrecy observed as regards the 'boon' announced at Dacca. It is indeed strange that when in England both Liberals and Conservatives are becoming discontented with the secrecy of the Foreign Office, we in India should be expected to reconcile ourselves to the methods of diplomacy in the settlement of the country's internal affairs. It was not an enviable frame of mind in which Macbeth resolved that,

> The fightly purpose never is o'ertook,
> Unless the deed go with it; from this moment,
> The firstlings of my heart shall be
> The firstlings of my hand.

As regards the merits of the changes, we are disposed to agree in the main with the views of H. H. the Aga Khan about the transfer of the Capital, though we shall not minimise the immediate loss that would be suffered by the owners of house property in Calcutta who could have reasonably counted on the prescription of a century and a half. But the gain to India as a whole far exceeds the loss, and so far as the Mussulmans of India are concerned, they have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

As regards the undoing of the Partition, however, are we to believe with His Highness that the old Partition was a mere sentimental grievance ? The Government of India, at any rate, do not say so, and although they have failed to specify the reasons why the Hindus of Bengal—not all the Bengali-speaking people—opposed it so vehemently, we have reason to believe that Government know them as well as we do. And however natural the opposition, are we sure that it is silenced now, and that the sentiments and interest which were then permanently alienated and offended are now satisfied and placated for ever ? In 1905, the old Bengal and Assam were given two Lieutenant-Governors instead of a Lieutenant-Governor and a Chief Commissioner. In 1911, they get a Governor, a Lieutenant-Governor and a Chief Commissioner. In 1905, they still had a single High Court, but after the announcement of 1911, it is certain that they will have two. In 1905, they had a single University, but in 1912 they get two, and there is every hope that in a few more years the loyal and sturdy Beharis, who now happen to be backward also will ask, and rightly so, for a third. Our opinion of the Hindus of Bengal will certainly be wholly falsified if these 'boons' will be received in the spirit of unqualified thankfulness. On the contrary the fear is—and we sincerely wish we may be proved to be a false prophet—that most of the reasons, weighty if also selfish, which masqueraded as 'the sentiments of the great Bengali-speaking millions of India' may still remain alienated and offended, and that more deeply even if less openly, while the success achieved in the ripping up of one 'settled fact' may encourage their leaders to work for another and a still greater triumph. Should things turn out as His Highness the Aga Khan seems to predict, Lord Hardinge and his colleagues would have earned the gratitude of the whole of India, and we hope and believe the Mussulmans would not then betray a narrowness which is foreign to their traditions. But we must wait and see, 'and we trust that those who have now decided upon the undoing of the Partition have a good deal of the spirit of those who do good by stealth and blush to find it fame. All the same, in spite of the advice of Polonius to Laertes, 'never a borrower or a lender be,' we are prepared to give the Government a fairly long credit of gratitude, and it rests with the Hindus of Bengal rather than with Mussulmans whether our draft will be honoured by the people's bank.

We fully agree with His Highness the Aga Khan that the real needs of the Mussulmans can be summed up in one word—'Education'. But it is difficult to believe that the only form which the assistance of the Government

to the Mussulmans of Bengal could have taken was the promised University at Dacca. While we are prepared to judge the gift on its merits, we are surprised that if this is the sole panacea for all the ills of Eastern Bengal, it did not occur to the Government during the six years when Eastern Bengal had a separate Local Government, and that it should have been carried out suddenly just at the time when the costly buildings erected at Dacca needed an occupant. It is so easy to get rid of the feeling which underlies the verse of Ghalib ?

(When the tavern is deserted, what matters the place ? It may be a mosque, a school, or the abode of the saints.) We are ready to accept that Eastern Bengal is not always fairly treated by the University of Calcutta and that Moslem educational interests would be better safeguarded by a University at Dacca and by the retention of the post of its Director of Public Instruction. But what guarantee is there that when the Government did not safeguard these interests in the Calcutta University in spite of the plenary powers which they possess under the Universities Act, they would adequately safeguard them in the Dacca University ? What the Mussulmans need is more liberal State assistance for poor but deserving Mussulman students and larger grants-in-aid to such institutions as attract Mussulman boys and girls. Another University does not necessarily guarantee all this; and even a Director at Dacca is not free from influences to which the Director at Calcutta has only too often succumbed.

But beggars cannot be choosers. The gift horse must not be examined too closely and the most serviceable animal is one's own shanks' mare. The Hon. Chaudhri Mohamed Ismail Khan has set an excellent example to his co-religionists, and we hope that instead of grumbling the Mussulmans would emulate his praiseworthy policy of self-help and self-reliance. We still believe that neither the Mussulmans of Western Bengal nor those of Eastern Bengal are so poor that they cannot found and maintain a first grade residential college at Calcutta and another at Dacca, and if they do so they will be better able to give to the Government an opportunity of proving in an unmistakeable manner their desire to give adequate encouragement to Moslem education. Had the Government at this juncture followed the policy to which the Sanscrit College owes its existence and prosperity, and reformed and enlarged the Madrassa at Calcutta and Dacca, all would have been well. Since they have done so, the Mussulmans should themselves attempt the more difficult task which we have suggested, and urge the Government to devote half the expenditure incurred by it on higher education out of public revenues as grants-in-aid to the proposed Moslem Colleges. In the meantime, the Mussulmans are too hungry to spurn half a loaf because a full loaf is denied to them, and they must accept the Dacca University and the Dacca Director with the gratitude that is really shown only by the meek in spirit.

As regards the effect of this 'boon' on the proposed Moslem University—alas ! still 'proposed'—if the Dacca University cannot be a rival, it can much less

be a substitute. The Mussulmans must have the direction of their secondary and higher education in their own hands, and this can only be affected by a University at Aligarh controlled by the Mussulmans themselves—though subject to the general supervision of Government—and with ramifications throughout India. So far as the Government have hitherto spoken out their mind, they do not seem to relish the idea of the Moslem University affiliating even efficient residential institutions outside Aligarh though conducted on Aligarh lines. Would the creation of a University at Dacca directly controlled by Government make it any easier for the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal to affiliate a College of their own to the University at Aligarh ? Again, is there no fear that local Moslem charity, which Mussulmans cannot afford to make a local or provincial monopoly, may be altogether diverted from Aligarh to Dacca ? Moreover, would not the favourite argument of the opponents of the Moslem University, that across their system it would cut its own deep ruts, and that it would break up or injure the territorial University, be repeated with still greater bitterness when Bengal has two Universities than when it has only one ? And then, if Dacca, thanks to its untenanted Secretariat, is to have a residential and teaching University, will not the Moslem University be depreciated in value because one of its distinguishing features will cease to be part of its differentia ? There are questions that must be considered carefully before the sceptics can be convinced that Aligarh has nothing to fear from Dacca. The race between the bird and the fish of His Highness the Aga Khan's simile no doubt appears absurd. But if instead of a race we think of a meal, the appetite satisfied by the *chingri* may not be whetted even at the sight of roast fowl.

Aligarh cannot certainly satisfy all the educational needs of Moslem India, specially on account of the tremendous distances. But Aligarh cannot rigidly be confined to the elite, nor should we attach too much importance to mere distance. All roads at one time led to Baghdad, as they did to Rome, and there were no mail trains annihilating distances in those days, nor was the Imperialistic ticket-collector the only bit of nuisance on the roadside. And many a doctor and divine of Islam was the poor man's son who studied borrowed manuscripts under the lamps of a mosque or the passing torches of aristocratic cavalcades. Practical difficulties are bound to make Aligarh, the main centre of the elite of Islam; but hitherto Aligarh has done more to help the indignant Moslems even in outlying provinces than local State assistance, and it will indeed be an evil day if Aligarh, when it attains its full stature, forgets its past traditions and belies the fair promise of its childhood. We are sure that H. H. the Aga Khan would be the last person to suggest anything of the kind, and that is why we felt it necessary to correct a possible misapprehension. So much for education.

But although education, more education, and better education is the ultimate remedy for all Moslem ills, Mussulmans have their immediate needs no less than other communities, and these cannot be ignored. While the root

malady that has undermined the constitution of the patient has got to be attacked, and none the constitution of the patient has got to be attacked, and none but a quack would neglect it, at a time when the patient appears to be sinking, immediate remedies, restoratives, and even artificial respiration, cannot be dispensed with. It is true that a Moslem majority in one province could not avail the Moslem minority of other provinces very much. But a mjority even in one province is not a valueless possession, and if it has got to be acquired even for public purposes and is readily relinquished, it is by no means necessary that a present should be made of the compensation as well.

Source : The Comrade, 10 February 1912.

65

VIQUAR-UL-MULK ON THE ANNULMENT OF PARTITION OF BENGAL

We perfectly agree that the action of the Government has given a real shock to all the Indian Moslems; but we entirely disagree to dissolve our National organisation which binds us together and to identify in the great mass of the predominent community. In other words, we cannot run the risk of letting our rivulet fall into a mighty ocean—only to pass away into nonentity.

Our aloofness from the Congress and other bodies, is not based on our loyalty to the Government. Loyalty is an attribute and not the thing itself. It must have something else for its foundation and cannot evidently remain unshaken while the foundation receives a shock. The aloofness of the Mussulmans from the Congress, therefore, has been founded on the fact that some of the important demands of that body are prejudicial to Mussulman interests. The 'Swaraj' of the Congress is fatal to the Mussulmans. The disappearance of the British Government from or even any decrease of its influence in India would be a calamity for us. That is to say, the same thing which may be regarded as nectar for our more fortunate brethren of the country, is poison for us, Mussulmans, who constitute the minority in this country. Whatever the result of the union of the two Bengals, it cannot affect the general truth contained in the above statement. If at all we have to live in India, it would be inadvisable to live in discord with the Government. To strive for the stability of the Government and to co-operate with it, is to strive, as it were, for our own stability. Therefore, let not such thoughts invade us. It is true that many times despair drags men to suicide. The idea of joining the Congress is undoubtedly the result of such despair, for the rise of which the Government is chiefly responsible. Yet never can

be allow suicide to be recommended.

The question of our future policy, therefore, forces itself upon us. It is now as clear as the sun at noon, that in face of the transactions now before us, it is fruitless to offer any advice to the Moslems to continue to depend on the Government. This is not the time for placing such trust. That which we should now lean upon, must be the power of our own arm, trusting alone in protection and blessing of our God. In this respect the example set by our honoured countrymen is before us.

For the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal it is in the first instance, imperative to continue certain efforts.

Firstly : Not only once but several times in the year they should hold meetings of the Provincial Mahommedan Educational Conference. No district should be without a local branch connected with the Provincial Conference, which should have an office organised on a wide scale and well provided with all kinds of administrative reports, newspapers and other information. This Provincial Committee should constantly keep the authorities aware of their requirements and rise their voice in the Press also. If the appeals at first fail to have the desired effect the Committee should continue to do their duty till the Government is obliged to yield.

Also, the Committee should endeavour to the best of their ability to promote general and higher education in their province maintaining their connection strong with the All-India Mahommedan Educational Conference to which should be referred all such matters as may have failed to obtain a local hearing.

Secondly : Likewise all over the province District Leagues should be scattered with a Provincial League at their head and having its connection with the All-India Muslim League. While generally representing to the Government, at their meetings and by means of correspondence, the claims and requirements of the Mussulmans of their province, their chief concern should be to see that the Moslem voice is not weakened in the Legislative Council of the Government of the United Bengal. In fact the Provincial Leagues can do much.

Thirdly : As (there) will be some delay before the result of the representations of the Conference and the League could be expected, the immediate concern of the Leaders of Muslims in Eastern Bengal (who have, through the weakness and indifference of the Government unfortunately failed to keep up the dignity of their Province) should be to make haste and lay before the Government their proposals as to the measures by means of which their interests and their present progressive state can be protected and maintained. They should vehemently urge that during the presence of His Majesty in India a declaration of the adoption of these measures be made by the Government. So long as the wound is fresh, a cure is possible—it is afterwards that it becomes incurable.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 10 January 1912.

66

LORD CURZON'S SPEECH
21 February 1912

As to the future of Calcutta, I am not one of those who think that the removal of the Government will seriously or detrimentally affect it. The importance of Calcutta results from its position on the sea, from its proximity to the great sources of supply of jute and coal and tea in Eastern India, and from the enterprise of its merchants. I dare say there will be some displacement of trade, some depreciation of property, perhaps some loss of money to individual firms; but I have little doubt that the mercantile community in Calcutta will show the patriotism and public spirit which they have displayed all along, and that, sore as they are at the displacement of their metropolitan city, they will bend their backs to win for Calcutta in the future as great and famous a place as it has had in the past. Personally I think the removal of the Government from Calcutta much more injurious to the Government than it will be to Calcutta. Of course this displacement will be welcomed elsewhere in India. I have never been able to understand why it is that rival citie regard each other with a jealousy to which rival lovers and even rival politicians seldom attain. But so it is, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Manchester and Liverpool, Milan and Turin, Petersburg and Moscow—in none of the cases is there any great warmth of affection between the two cities or the inhabitants. And it is quite true that the supremacy of Calcutta has always excited very poignant emotions in the breasts of Madras and Bombay. Every year there is a sort of struggle when the Census figures come out to try and prove that Calcutta is or is not the premier city in India, and, though I do not wish to do my friends who have been Governors of Madras an injustice, I believe that at the bottom of their hearts there is a sort of sneaking satisfaction at the dethronement of Calcutta.

But you have not merely dethroned Calcutta; you have accompanied that act with the reversal of the so-called partition of Bengal. It is six and a half years since that measure was carried. I use the phrase 'partition' for brevity sake; I do not think it at all describes the fact. During that time I have seen the most extraordinary descriptions of the object of the Government of India which have made me sometimes rub my eyes and wonder whether I was living in a world of reality. Every one knows that that was an administrative measure which had been called for for years. I was not the man to start it. It had been discussed for twenty years before my day. I took it up because half way through my time in India I became acquainted with the scandalous maladministration which was going on in the Eastern Province of Bengal, and the shocking neglect of education and public works and all that goes to make the contented life of a people, and with the

oppression of the Mahommedans by their neighbours. That was a blot upon the Government of India. It was due to the fact that you were trying to administer the affairs of eighty millions of people through one Government and one man, and the only way to remedy it was to divide the Province and duplicate the machinery of government. What was the particular line to be drawn when the division was made was a matter not for the Viceroy. The Viceroy does not settle such issues. The line was settled by consultation and discussion between the local Governments and officials, representative bodies, and so on. They agreed upon a line, and that line was based upon ethnical and geographical considerations, the importance of which could not be denied. I gladly accepted it. I knew the obloquy with which I should be overwhelmed, because I was aware that the line of division would run counter to the personal interests of journalists, pleaders, and landlords whose head-quarters were Calcutta. But I was willing to run the risk. I decided to bear the brunt because I believed the decision to be right, and because I was certain that in the long run—I hoped in the short run—truth would prevail.

The Partition was promulgated in October 1905. I came home the month after, and the Liberal Government came into office in December. They might have disowned my act, the act of my Government, and I should not have complained if they had done so. I might have regretted it, but I could not have complained. But no, they accepted it. The noble Viscount will bear me out that never on a single occasion, public or private, did I ever put any pressure upon him. I do not think I ever mentioned it to him. They decided on their own initiative to carry on that policy. The noble Viscount said he disapproved of the methods by which it had been carried. I never knew what he meant by that. But he said over and over again in this House and elsewhere that he and his colleagues regarded it as a settled fact. That reply was repeated over and over again by your officials in India. Now what happened ? As time went on the Bengalis began to realise that their agitation was futile. The fruits of partition became manifest. The new Province advanced in education, in good government, in every mark of prosperity. Your officers there did the most admirable work in creating this new fabric, and over and over again, acting on your instructions, they repeated the assurance to the population that this was a settled fact and that the good faith of the British Government was pledged to its continuance. It is true that outside a fitful and sputtering agitation was kept up by the Bengali community, but that was done more for form than for anything else, and there was neither substance nor life in the agitation.

Your Lordships may think I am an interested party. Let me therefore give you the opinions, not of myself, but of important natives of India. There is a well-known Bengali writer, Mr. Mitra, who wrote in 1908 a book called *Indian Problems*, and this is what he said :

'The cut-and-dried phrases of the professional agitator should not confuse the British public. It is clear that the partition does not make the

Bengali a farthing the worse in person, reputation, or pocket. It was an admirable move, calculated to benefit millions.'

Then there was a discussion in the Imperial Legislative Council. My noble friend Lord Minto was in the Chair and will recall what I am going to say. One of the most conspicuous Congress representatives had repeated the familiar charges against the Partition, and a native member for the Province got up and said (this was on 30 March 1910) :

'On the strength of the views of Lord MacDonnell the Partition of Bengal has been called a blunder, and your Excellency has been invited to undo it. I, on the other hand, knowing and realising full well the responsibility that attaches to a member of this Council, most emphatically assert that if the government meddled with this beneficent measure it would be committing an act of supreme folly; it would be creating serious discontent and unrest where none exists now.'

Lord Macdonnell of Swinford : Will the noble Earl mention the speaker's name ?

Earl Curzon of Kedleston : Yes. He was Mr. Mazharul Haque Mahommedan member for Eastern Bengal; and this gentleman was followed by Mr. Shamsul Huda, another native member, who said he had once signed a petition against Partition but had grown wiser as years rolled by, and he described the Partition as greatly beneficial to the Province. I should like to quote one other authority, that of the distinguished Correspondent of *The Times*. I quote this authority because *The Times* is, as I gather, one of the leading supporters of His Majesty's Government in this case, and it is interesting therefore to know what their Correspondent said when he was in India three years ago. He wrote :

'The agitation against Partition is dying, even in Bengal, and is almost unregarded in the other Provinces. The authorities are too firmly convinced of the administrative value of the division to attempt any modification now, and there is the further fact that any reversal of policy might have dangerous results. The eighteen millions of Mahommedans would bitterly resent any suggestion of the repeal of Partition. It stands in no need of renewed vindication, for it has been entirely justified by results.'

The second passage is even stronger. This was written in Bengal on 15 February 1909 :

'I have yet to meet anybody, English or Indian, who can tell me in what respect the Partition has injured a single living soul, while one has only to visit the Province, invigorated with new life and inspired by new aspirations, to realise the benefits which the severance has conferred upon millions of neglected people. To alter or to modify it now would be suicidal folly. It would be worse, for it would be a criminal blunder.'

That is very strong language—it is not mine, it comes from an authority much greater than myself—and I leave His Majesty's Government to dispose of it as best they can. This is the moment, when this spurious and vexatio..

agitation has died down, when the benefits of Partition have been conclusively vindicated, when everything is going well in the new Province, that a new Viceroy appears on the scene and in a few weeks is enabled to inform the world that all of us have been entirely wrong.

The Government of India say in their Despatch that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition of Bengal is very widespread, that the resentment among the Bengalis is as strong as ever though less vocal, and the Government of India make the astonishing discovery that the Partition has been responsible for the growing estrangement in many parts of the country between Mahommedans and Hindus. *Finally*, comes the Secretary of State, also new to his office, and he tells us that the Viceroy has depicted the consequences of Partition with accuracy and fairness. I deny every one of those propositions and I challenge the noble Marquess to produce any competent or reliable evidence in support of the assertions which he contends are characterised by accuracy and fairness. Can he quote the authority of a single Lieutenant-Governor who has served in Bengal in recent years? Can he quote the authority of the last or the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal? Can he name a single representative body or institution in India that will support his view? I have heard of none, and I am not aware that they exist. I think I can quote the highest authority of all, and that is the Secretary of State himself. If you look at the White Paper you will see that on 1 November the Secretary of State put his signature to the Despatch in which he congratulates the Government of India on the accuracy and fairness of their statement—this statement about the ill-feeling and unrest existing in Bengal about Partition. But on 2 November we had a debate in this House about some Indian matters, and the Secretary of State then used a different line of argument. He wanted to show how well things were going on, and he said :

'There is nothing now in the general temper, not merely of the people of India as a whole, but of any race or section of the people of India, which ought to cause anything which can be described by the word 'anxiety.'

When the Secretary of State made that remark, which I believed to be true, I loudly cheered, and I should have cheered all the more had I known that he was cutting away the ground from his own statement of the day before, and that he was about so effectually to demolish his own case.

I dare say the Secretary of State will try to console me by saying that partition has not been revoked—that my Government divided Bengal into two Provinces, and that he has divided Bengal into three, and that therefore he is carrying further the principle which I adopted. In fact that is true. There is no reversion to the status quo ante. Nobody would be foolish or insane enough to propose such a thing. But to all intents and purposes the old partition has been reversed. For the Province I have described has ceased to exist, and the Mahommedans in it, who were for the first time given a chance of asserting their independent existence, are once again merged in a

great Hindu province, the fortunes of which will be dictated from Calcutta. Perhaps the best judges of whether partition is reversed or not will be found in India herself. Directly after the announcement was made at Delhi the Congress Committee met and passed a vote of thanks to the Government for the fulfilment of their political aspirations; and subsequently, at the meeting of the Congress, the President spoke of the annulment of partition as a triumph in the most momentous Constitutional struggle in modern times. Not in any part of India is there any doubt that agitation has won the day. You may disclaim that was your intention, but so it is universally regarded, and if so no one is really responsible but yourselves. If you declare a measure to be a settled fact and instruct your officials so to inform the people, and if then, six years later, you turn round and throw to the winds what you have said, can you be surprised that this is regarded on your part as an exhibition of weakness or that it is thought and said that agitation has won the day ?

Now as regards the Mahommedans, what do they say ? Do they agree that partition has not been reversed ? My Lords, I think the position of the Mahommedans in Eastern Bengal is one of the saddest features of the present situation. For six years or more they have held aloof from agitation and have occupied themselves with building up their province. Dacca, the capital, had started upon a new life; they looked forward to having a University and High Court there; over and over again they have been to the Government and have been assured by the officers of Government that the thing was a settled fact and was going to remain. Now that policy is reversed. No wonder they feel bitter ! I speak from having seen letters from their leading men and from a knowledge of resolutions which have been passed in all their cities. It is a matter of common knowledge throughout India that their leading nobleman, when he was decorated the other day at Delhi, said :

'The ribbon which you hang round my neck is a halter with which I am to hang myself.'

The Marquess of Crewe : May I ask the noble Earl's authority for that singular statement ?

Earl Curzon of Kedleston : I can give the noble Marquess the authority privately. It has been constantly repeated and is well known to be the fact. All these resolutions speak of the Government having gone back on its word, and the face of Government as being blackened. If I were the Secretary of State handing an olive branch to India I confess that I should feel some pang of compunction at this sacrifice of Mahommedan interests. It is a bad thing for the Government of India when its word is broken. It is a bad thing for the prestige of Government. It is a bad thing for your officers, too. I wonder if you have paused to think what are the sentiments of your officials in this Province who for years past have been assuring the people that you would be true to your word, and who now see—I will not say their

work thrown away, because good work is never thrown away, but see the pledges which they have given with your authority broken.

The Government of India are, I know, conscious of this feelings, and they have sought in their Despatch to allay the fears of the Mahommedans. In their Despatch the Government of India say that the numbers of the Mahommedans will be about equal to those of the Bengalis in the new Province, and they will have special representation in the Council. I do not think there is much comfort to be derived from that. The Mahommedans in India know very well that they cannot compete with the Bengalis in organisation, in education, or in wealth. Influence in India is not a question of numbers; it is a question of ability and character and organisation. Nothing, I am afraid, can alter the fact that whereas up to 12 December last the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal were the predominant element in the Province now the balance has swung round and once more they are under Calcutta.

The government of India in their Despatch say that the new Governor of Bengal is to reside at Dacca from time to time, and the Secretary of State goes rather further and says that the Governor should regard Dacca as a second capital with a claim on his attention and residence for an appreciable part of the year. What does that mean ? Is residence at Dacca to be optional ? What in practice will happen ? I know very well that in the winter months Calcutta will pull him in one direction, that in the summer months Darjiling will pull him in another, and that Dacca stands the risk of being squeezed out between these two. I do not think the assurances in the Despatch are enough. There is a strong feeling in India that it would be well to place some statutory obligation upon the Governor of Bengal to spend a certain part of the year at Dacca. I do not give an opinion on that point, but I do say we ought to instruct him to spend at least three months of the year in Dacca, and if possible to take with him the Council and the whole machinery of Government. This is the only way in which you can derive any return for the enormous sums spent on establishing a capital at Dacca—between £ 5,00,000 and £ 10,00,000—and which you can salve the wounded feelings of Mahommedans and give them some guarantee of fair treatment in future.[1]

Source : Parliamentary Debates : Fifth Series, Vol. XI, George V, House of Lords, First Volume of Session, 14 February to 16 May 1912.

work thrown away, because good work is never thrown away, but see
pledges which they have given with some authority broken.

The Government of India are I know, conscious of this feelings,
they have sought in their Despatch to allay the fears of the Mahommedan
In their Despatch the Government of India say that the numbers of
Mahommedans will be about equal to those of the Bengalis in the n
Province, and they will have special representation in the Council. I do n
think there is much comfort to be derived from that. The Mahommedans
India know very well that they cannot compete with the Bengalis in orga
tion, in education, or in wealth. Influence in India is not a question
numbers; it is a question of ability and character and organisation. Noth
I am afraid, can alter the fact that whereas up to 12 December last t
Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal were the predominant element in
Province now the balance has swung around and once more they a
under Calcutta.

The government of India in their Despatch say that the new Govern
of Bengal is to reside at Dacca from time to time, and the Secretary of St
goes rather further and says that the Governor should regard Dacca a
second capital with a claim on his attention and residence for an appreciab
part of the year. What does that mean? Is residence at Dacca to
optional? What in practice will happen? I know very well that in t
winter months Calcutta will pull him in one direction, that in the summ
months Darjiling will pull him in another, and that Dacca stands the risk
being squeezed out between these two, and do not think the assurances in th
Despatch are enough. There is a strong feeling in India that it would be w
to place some statutory obligation upon the Governor of Bengal to spend
certain part of the year at Dacca. I do not give an opinion on that poi
but I do say we ought to instruct him to spend at least three months of th
year in Dacca, and if possible to take with him the Council and the wh
machinery of Government. That is the only way in which you can derive a
return for the enormous sums spent on establishing a capital at Dac
between £ 5,00,000 and £ 10,00,000—and which you can salve the woun
feelings of Mahommedans and give them some guarantee of fair treatm
in future.¹

¹Source : Parliamentary Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. XI, George V, House of Lor
First Volume of Session, 14 February to 16 May 1912

SECTION 3

SIMLA DEPUTATION AND THE FORMATION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE

1

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
9 May 1906

I am answering your urgent questions by telegram. As to possible Mahommedan feeling, in case of war with the Turks, I feel sure from all the inquiries I have made that there need not be any anxiety as to the employment by us of Mahommedan troops. I send you a copy of a letter from Major General Bayly, whom I consulted, amongst others, which appears to me very sound. On the other hand, if we were to get into difficulties with the Amir on a large scale with the frontier tribes, the dangerous effect of a Mahommedan propaganda might fairly be expected. There is as you no doubt know a pan-Islamic movement working in India in no friendly sense towards our rule, and, even in present circumstances, it will probably make itself felt. Indeed, only yesterday I received a Mahommedan protest against war with the Sultan. But I should not apprehend the slightest risk as to this in respect to effects on the Army, though, as I say, it might help seriously to aggravate fanatical action against us on the frontier.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1905-06.

2

NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S LETTER TO ARCHBOLD
4 August 1906

You must have read and thought over Mr. John Morley's speech on Indian Budget. It is very much talked of among the Mahommedans of India, and is commonly believed to be a great success achieved by the 'National Congress'.

You are aware that the Mahommedans already feel a little disappointed, and young educated Mahommedans seems to have a sympathy for the 'Congress', and this speech will produce a greater tendency in them to join the 'Congress'. Although there is little reason to believe that any Mahommedans, except the young educated ones will join that body, there is still a general complain on their part that we (Aligarh people) take no part

in politics, and do not safeguard the political rights of Mahommedans, they say that we do not suggest any plans for preserving their rights, and particularly do nothing and care nothing for the Mahommedans beyond asking for funds to help the college. I have got several letters drawing attention particularly to the new proposal of 'elected representatives' in the Legislative Councils. They say that the existing rules confer no rights on Mahommedans; and no Mahommedans get into the Councils by election; every now and then the Government nominates a stray Mahommedan or two by kindness, not however, on the ground of his ability, but of his position, who is neither fit to discharge his duties in Council nor is he considered a true representative of his community. If the new rules now to be drawn up introduce 'election' on a more extended scale, the Mahommedans will hardly get a seat, while Hindus will carry off the palm by dint of their majority and no Mahommedan will get into the Councils by election.

It has also been proposed that a memorial be submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy to draw the attention of Government to a consideration of the rights of Mahommedans.

I feel it is a very important matter, and if we remain silent, I am afraid, people will leave us to go their own way and act up to their own personal opinions.

Will you therefore inform me if it would be advisable to submit a memorial from the Mahommedans to the Viceroy, and to request His Excellency's permission for a deputation to wait on His Excellency to submit the view of Mahommedans on the matter ?

Source : Letter enclosed with Minto's letter to Morley, 8 August 1906.

3

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY
8 August 1906

I... enclose you a copy of a letter to Mr. Archbold, Principal of the Aligarh College from Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the Manager of the college. It was only put before me today and is important as illustrating the trend of Mahommedan thought, and the apprehension that Mahommedan interests may be neglected in dealing with any increase of representation on the Legislative Councils. I have not had time to think over the advisibility of receiving the proposed deputation; but am inclined to do so....

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1906.

4

LETTER FROM W. A. J. ARCHBOLD TO DUNLOP SMITH
9 August 1906

I have written to the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, telling him to do nothing till he hears from me, and asking him to write to Syed Husain Bilgrami suggesting that he should wait too. There is one consideration which I am sure you will not overlook in thinking what had best be done. The Dacca Mahommedans are very much interested in the matter we were talking of, and will certainly join in any deputation of the kind suggested in the Nawab's letter; we have had a good deal of communication with them of late. It might be a good thing if in their present excited state, their energies could be directed in a natural and legitimate direction, and it would, I am sure, quiet things if some reassuring statement could be made to the deputation, all of which need not involve injustice to the Hindus or to anyone else.

If the Mahommedans were informed (Privately) that a deputation would be received and a statement made, what would happen would be that representative Mahommedans from various parts of India would come to Simla and present a carefully drawn-up petition. The number would not be very large, as the people who ought to be on it are very well known. From my knowledge of those who would lead I am sure that nothing in the slightest degree disloyal or objectionable would be brought forward. There is no wish on the part of the Mahommedans to give trouble to the Government in any way, only, if I may judge, a certain widespread nervousness and uneasiness as to the future, a fear lest they should be left out in the cold.

Please forgive this long letter. When I read of the meeting and uneasiness in Dacca, and saw the names of those concerned, I was very anxious to suggest the deputation as a solvent of the difficulties there, as well as possibly elsewhere.

REPLY FROM DUNLOP SMITH
10 August 1906

I have told him His Excellency will agree to receive the deputation.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

5

LETTER FROM SIR DENZIL IBBETSON TO DUNLOP SMITH
10 August 1906

I return Mohsin-ul-Mulk's letter, and entirely agree with you that H.E. should receive the deputation, and answer them sympathetically.

I have heard from other quarters also what Mohsin-ul-Mulk says about the aspirations of the younger generation of Mahommedans. Their aspirations are perfectly natural. But it would be a calamity if they were to drive those who feel them into the arms of the Congress party; for at present the educated Mahommedan is the most conservative element in Indian society.

I agree with you that the acceptance of Sir B. Fuller's resignation will produce a deplorable effect upon Mahommedans every where. But I do not agree that that will be the worst of its effects. There will, in my opinion, be many worse.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

6

LETTER FROM MOHSIN-UL-MULK TO ARCHBOLD
18 August 1906

Thanks for your letter of the 14th instant, together with a draft of the formal application. I am sending it to a few of my friends, but I am sure nobody will like the opening phrases which give an assurance of a deliberate aloofness from political agitation in the future. Probably also they will not like me to represent their cause to Government without the means of a political association. I shall, however, let you know what is decided.

I find that Mahommedan feeling is very much changed, and I am constantly getting letters using emphatic language, and saying that the Hindus have succeeded owing to their agitation, and the Mahommedans have suffered for their silence. The Mahommedans have generally begun to think of organising a political association and forming themselves into political agitators. Although it is impossible for the Mahommedans, on account of their lack of ability and union and want of funds, to attain any success like the Hindus, and they are likely to lose rather than gain by such a course, it is yet impossible for anybody to stop them. The Mahommedans of Eastern

Bengal have received a severe shock. I have got a letter from Syed Nawab Ali Chowdry of Dacca who gives utterance to the extremely sorrowful feeling prevailing there. He says : '...up till now the Mahommedans of Bengal have been careless. They have now begun to feel the consequences of their carelessness. If only the Mahommedans of Bengal, instead of following the Government, had agitated like the Hindus and had enlisted the sympathies of the Mahommedans of the whole of India, raised their voice up to the Parliament, they would never have seen these unfortunate consequences.

The resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller has produced an unrest throughout the Mahommedans in the whole of Bengal, and their aspirations for higher education and increased rank and responsibility are being subsided. Looking at it from one point of view the Government has taught a good lesson to the Mahommedans by accepting Sir Bampfylde's resignation. It has served to awaken them after a sleep of carelessness. We shall now have to proceed on the same lines as the Hindus, not only in India, but in England.

This is only a brief quotation of what I am getting from the whole of India. These people generally, say that the policy of Sir Syed and that of mine has done no good to Mahommedans. They say that Government has proved by its actions that without agitation there is no hope for any help for the college; in short, the Mahommedans generally will desert us, because the policy of the college is detrimental to their interests. My dear Archbold, nobody can say that the present state of Mahommedan feeling is without its justification. The Liberal Government is at the bottom of it, and is responsible for it. I consider it a wrong policy arising out of the ignorance of the real conditions in India. Mr. John Morley is a philosopher and might well have been contented to give lessons in philosophy; and one cannot but feel sorry that the destiny of India has been placed in his hands.

His policy has done a lot of injury to India and may do much more. Is it right for the Government to allow an important section of the Indian population, which has always supported and even depended on Government to safeguard its interests, to be disappointed and get up a spirit of agitation like the Hindus ? I only hope that the Government of India will do something to subside the growing Mahommedan feeling and to remedy their hopelessness.

P. S. I have informed Sir James La Touche of the proposal to send a memorial and deputation to the Viceroy because I thought it was necessary.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

7

LETTERS FROM W. A. J. ARCHBOLD TO DUNLOP SMITH

I

20 August 1906

I see and hear that things in Eastern Bengal and Assam are still in a very unhappy condition. If there is any danger of trouble from the side of the Mahommedans at any time, I need hardly say how glad I should be to go and talk with the leaders, and do my best to keep them within bounds.

What I am thinking of is this. His Excellency the Viceroy has consented to receive the Deputation, provided all is in order. I have drawn up the 'formal request' for the Mahommedans, and they are by this time, I hope, busy getting it signed. It would be quite easy to show the leading people how fatal to their own cause any violence would be, and how much better it would prove to stick to the constitutional course, even though they may feel it difficult in the present excited state of feeling to do so.

We are all very anxious that the Mahommedans should not put themselves in the wrong; it is just what their enemies would like. As you know, they are rather backward in the art of political agitation, and the danger is that they may go wrong through ignorance. I am very glad that they have restrained themselves as well as they have done.

II

22 August 1906

The enclosed from Mohsin-ul-Mulk I obtained permission to show. It might be worthwhile having a copy sent to Mr. Hare for his private information so that he might have it before him, not that it contains anything that he will not know.

So much for the dark side of things.

I have just had a wire from Syed Husain Bilgrami of Hyderabad, saying that he fully agrees with a long letter I sent to him, so that he is on the side of order and constitutional action. This is a great moral gain, as he will have much to say, and is in many ways a leader. I hope that he will now keep the rather excited Mahommedans of Bengal within bounds. Bilgrami is going to meet Mohsin-ul-Mulk at Bombay.

I have written a long letter to Syed Nawab Ali Chowdry of Dacca, telling him to keep all his friends quiet and talking about the coming deputation. I have had letters from him before.

Please don't trouble to write, as I know how busy you must be, but, when you have done with Mohsin-ul-Mulk's letter, you might send it back to me.

P. S. Of Course, if a copy of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's letter is sent to Mr. Hare, it will be marked strictly confidential.

Source **: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.**

8

LETTER FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO HARE
24 August 1906

I am directed to enclose, for your information, copies of some correspondence sent to me by Mr. Archbold. He is the Principal of Aligarh, and is in touch with a large section of the Mussulman community.

He first of all wrote and offered to go to Dacca—strictly in a private capacity—if His Excellency thought he could be of any service. I was instructed to reply that His Excellency did not think the Mahommedan unrest was so acute as to necessitate heroic measures.

The Viceroy has consented to receive a large and representative deputation of Mahommedans some time next month. I have not yet got a draft of their address, but they are sure to allude to the idea of their coreligionists in Bengal that they have been thrown over by Government. Is there anything you would like the Viceroy to say in his reply ? His Excellency would feel grateful for any suggestions you may have.

Source **: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.**

9

LETTER FROM L. HARE TO DUNLOP SMITH
1 September 1906

Until the terms of the address are known, it is difficult to say what should be the answer. The main answer must be that the Government have

no intention whatever to neglect or overlook the interest of the Mahommedans but in the future, as in the past, will make it their utmost endeavour to maintain the equal rights of all its subjects, and will always do whatever they can to further the prosperity and welfare of the Mahommedans as of every other class of its subjects (or to this effect).

...the only advice I really wish to give is that it should be made clear that the Government of India are in full sympathy with the hopes and aspirations of the Mahommedans community, and are fully prepared to help them, as far as possible without undue favour or detriment to other classes.

The next point which I think must be taken up is whether the Government of India can accept the Mahommedans who address them and the other several Mahommedan bodies who have met and expressed their views, as representative of the feeling and opinions of the Mahommedans generally.

If the Government can do so, and if it can say it does so, I think it will have a great political effect. It is then unnecessary for the Mahommedans to start on a campaign of political agitation. I think it is necessary for the Government of India to know what are the views in this respect of the Home Government....

If the Home Government will not accept the assurance that these representative Mahommedans do truly represent Mahommedan opinion, so far as any opinion has been formed at all, then I think the Mahommedans will decide that they must organise meetings.to voice Mahommedan opinion.

If agitation continues, and the Mahommedans are satisfied that this is the way to get their wishes, they cannot be held back from counter-agitating, and this will, within, my opinion be disastrous.

10

LETTER FROM THE MUSSULMANS OF BOMBAY TO THE VICEROY
6 September 1906

In past years the Mahommedan people of India have, in spite of some temptations, kept studiously aloof from all forms of Political agitation and they feel confident that the Government recognises this fact; that it has their best interests at heart; and that it will carefully safeguard those interests in the future.

At the present moment, however, when various changes in the composition of the Legislative Council and in other Departments of Government have been mentioned as being under consideration, it may be useful to the

Authorities to hear a carefully considered expression of opinion offered by representative Mahommedans from various parts of India dealing with their reasonable aims and expectations in regard to their future political position in India.

We, therefore, beg most respectfully that Your Excellency would allow a Deputation of leading Mahommedans to wait upon you at Simla and to present an Address embodying their views. We cannot claim to be the representatives of any general political association—such, indeed, does not exist amongst the Mahommedans at the present moment—but we feel sure, living as we do in many parts of India, that we are expressing the wishes of our coreligionists in asking this favour, and also that at the present time the reception of such a Deputation would allay that anxiety as to the future which many Mahommedans feel.

We have asked Moulvi Mahdee Ally to forward this request on our behalf.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, 23 October 1906.

11

LETTER FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO MAHDEE ALLY KHAN
13 September 1906

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 7th instant, forwarding a memorial requesting that His Excellency the Viceroy will permit a Deputation of leading Mahommedans to wait upon His Excellency to present an address.

In reply, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency will have much pleasure in receiving the Deputation, and trusts that the 1st October at 11 A. M. will be a convenient day and hour for the Deputation. I am to request that a copy of the proposed address may be furnished to me for His Excellency's information as early as possible.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

12

THE PIONEER ON THE PROPOSED MAHOMMEDAN DEPUTATION

It goes without saying that the influential Deputation of representative Mahommedans, which is about to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy, is assured of a cordial and most sympathetic reception. The names of the delegates who have been chosen to lay the case of their co-religionists before Lord Minto are known to be those of men whose sincere loyalty to the Government is beyond even the thought of suspicion, and the great community they represent has been conspicuous for its appreciation of just and kindly rule, and for the support it has given to all the officers of the administration in the performance of their varied and arduous duties. Here and there an individual Mahommedan may be carried away by the passion for mere popular applause, and may have associated himself with political movements which, if not openly disloyal, are at least antagonistic to the system of government and prone to put the worst possible interpretations upon the policy and the actions of Anglo-Indians. But it is not in the nature of the Mahommedans to mix themselves up in blatant clamour for revolutionary changes in methods of government. They are instinctively conservative-possibly, indeed, too conservative in their thoughts and action. They do not look upon the Democratic institutions of the West with envious eyes, and insist that these should be transferred to the wholly different conditions of the East. The basis of their minds is practical, the tendency of their hearts is to be loyal to the authority which has made itself supreme. They would bear misrule patiently if it did not touch the principles which they hold most sacred, and they are grateful in the extreme to a government which assures to them the most absolute freedom in the practices of their religion, which deals justly with all ranks and conditions of men, and which is strong enough to ensure the blessings of peace to the country of their birth, where all their worldly interests are concentrated. Almost it would seem under these conditions that the Mahommedan community have no grievances and no claims to lay before the Viceroy when they meet him on the lst of October. But they are not as a population living in one section of India where they can be indifferent to all that is happening elsewhere. They are part of a vast diversified, and much mingled population. While they may hold aloof from the forms of political agitation in which other classes engage, they cannot be indifferent to these, lest their action be misunderstood and their legitimate claims neglected. In Eastern Bengal a feeling has already arisen that the disloyalty of Bengali Hindus has been dealt with more tenderly than the loyalty of the Mahommedans who form a majority of the population in the new province. Sir Bampfylde Fuller had their entire confidence, and was

dealing with all their claims in a spirit of fairness that produced intense gratification. When he left, under conditions which appeared to give some excuse for the boast of his opponents that they had driven him from office, it was most natural for the Mahommedans to ask themselves whether a change had come over the British rulers, and whether the time was at hand when blustering agitation would be a surer way to rewards and favours than quiet and dignified obedience to the laws and respect for those whose duty it is to administer them.

The Government of India owes a good deal to the Mahommedans of that province for the self-restraint they displayed while they were taunted by men... inebriated with the thoughts of their own success. If the Mahommedan community had lost faith in the justice of the administration and had taken into their own hands the assertion of majority rights, the departure of Sir Bampfylde Fuller would have marked the beginning of grave civil strife. But the deputation which is to wait upon Lord Minto, though it should not be regarded as mere protest against what has occurred in Eastern Bengal, has been wisely chosen as a means whereby those whose minds have been troubled by recent events can lay their case before the head of the Government and ask for an assurance that their interests will not be overlooked. It must be acknowledged that they have some justification for their anxiety. The Hindu races amount in round figures to two-thirds of the whole population of India including some of the very best and some of the worst elements in the community. Against this vast total the Mahommedans can only number about sixty-three millions, and Eastern Bengal is one of the few administrative sections of the Empire in which they can count upon a majority. When there is much talk of introducing representative forms of government, the smaller denominational groups ask themselves whether this means that there is to be a change from the impartiality o the British Government, which is its most widely appreciated characteristic, to the domination of one religious section, which is obviously strong enough to outvote all the rest. True it may be that the time is still far distant when the changes will have gone far enough to interfere with the supreme authority of the Viceroy and his advisers, the actual rulers of the country. But prudent men do not sit quietly while the first stages of a movement which may ultimately overwhelm them are in progress. They wish to know how the future is to be shaped so that they may guard themselves against the consequences of change. Fair promises and assurances abound among those who are preaching the new gospel of 'India a Nation.' The Bengali Hindu when disporting himself on a political platform affirms that a desire for the broadest toleration burns more brightly in his heart than any other sentiment. But such promise and assurances are not exchangeable for gold or silver—they are a mere paper currency which may be depreciated at any time. Rival creeds rarely live in perfect harmony politically. In Ireland the Roman Catholics and the Protestants hate each other, though they are both the Christian faith, and in England the Church is hated by the

Nonconformists as bitterly as if the one were Heathen and the other Deistic, yet both belong to the same general brand of Christianity.

With these somewhat melancholy examples before us we ought to be quite capable of appreciating the point of view from which the smaller sects in India look with uneasiness upon any change that a so-called westernisation of the methods of government might bring about. The perfect harmony which prevails between all the religious groups in India must not be taken as an evidence that there is no danger of friction, yet even fierce antagonisms, arising among them under different conditions. They are restrained by a system which is better suited to India than any other that the wit of man can devise. No doubt the Mahommedans will take their part in any political changes that may be brought about in deference to the new sentiment in favour of a 'step forward'. It would be prudent of the Government of India to draw upon their services as partners in the great work of administration and legislation more freely than in the past. Is it not a fact that the public offices and services are crowded with men chosen rather for a certain parrot aptitude in acquiring knowledge than for the higher masculine qualities ? Mahommedans have been rather indifferent to the Western educational methods which their more nimble-witted Hindu fellow countrymen have seized upon with almost disastrous avidity, and so they have not kept pace with them in the competition for public employment. Yet there are other ways in which Mahommedan interests might be cared for and the continued loyalty of the community assured and these ought not to be neglected. It is impossible that Lord Minto can do much more than convey in courteous terms the assurance of his own sympathy when he replies to the Mahommedan deputation. But its effect cannot be measured by what will take place at the interview. We are not without hope that the statements which will be made may have a profound influence upon the mind of Mr. Morley, who is neither a blind partisan nor a bigot, but a man quite capable of taking large views when both sides of a case are fully presented to his mind. He must see that the 'step forward' of which he spoke in his eloquent budget speech must be taken with extreme caution, since it may lead away from the safe ground of British justice to all creeds and races, and produce conditions in which the task of controlling the actions of a majority flushed with new and untried political powers might be almost greater than the executive Government could perform.

Source : The Pioneer, 30 September 1906.

13

THE TIMES ON THE FORCES OF LOYALTY

At a time when disloyal agitation is so ripe in India it is worthwhile to take stock of the forces of loyalty which are co-operating, or which would be willing to co-operate with the British Government. There is no political force favourable to British rule of anything like the importance of the Mussulmans community. Englishmen who know of India only what they can learn in the Statistical Abstract are sometimes inclined to under-value the importance of the Mahommedans because they number only 53 millions out of a total population of 231 millions in British India.

It is probable, however, that no single cause has so much contributed to the importance of the Mahommedan community as the strong sense of corporate unity by which the scattered members of the body are bound together. Although they live in many different provinces of India they all claim to speak the same language; Urdu (or Hindustani) is, they assert, the national speech of the Indian Moslems. Even though this is not absolutely true, for the uneducated Mahommedan speaks only the *patois* of his neighbourhood, it is true in the only sense which is important; that leaders of the Mahommedan community do all speak the same language, read the some newspapers; for this reason ideas circulate very rapidly among the scattered groups of the Mahommedan population, and, in spite of the distances by which they are separated, a common public opinion animates the whole mass. It is not surprising that the men who are working for the same object different centres should be acquainted with each other; but it is an illustration of the closeness with which the separate parts of the Mahommedans community are linked together that the Mahommedan leaders in the Punjab, United Provinces, Hyderabad, Bombay, Bihar and Bengal are personal friends.

To this solidarity of the Mahommedan community is due the fact that for the last 20 years all Mahommedans have acted together in politics and all have united to support the same policy. The main outlines of that policy were decided at Lucknow in December 1887, when the great Sir Syed Ahmed Khan made the speech which, like a trumpet call, summoned every Mussulman out of the Congress and ranged them definitely under another standard. Sir Syed contended that the systematic creation of disaffection which was the policy of the National Congress could only end in disturbing the peace of the country and would put back all moral and intellectual progress for more than a generation. He said : 'Suppose that this agitation that has arisen in Bengal—and I imagine that no danger can spring from it there—suppose that this agitation extends to these provinces, to the Rajputs and the Pathans of Peshâwar—do you think it will confine itself to

writing with the pen, giz, giz, and to mere talking buk buk buk ? It will then be necessary for Government to send its army and show by bayonets what the proper remedy for this agitation is. I believe that when the Government sees the Mahommedans and other brave races taking part in this stupid agitation it will be necessary for the Government to pass a new law and to fill the gaols. O my brothers—children of my breast—this is your relationship to Government. You should conduct yourselves in a straight forward and calm manner; not come together to make a nice hobbub like a flock of crows.

Sir Syed not only believed that political agitation was dangerous to the peace of India, but he also held the opinion that by temperament and religion the Mahommedans were more nearly allied to the English than to any of the peoples of India. As a person who had once held sway, he appealed to them to remember the difficulties against which every Government has to contend. He said :

Reflect on the doings of your ancestors and be not unjust to the British Government, to whom God has given the rule of India, and look honestly and see what is necessary for it to do to maintain its Empire and its hold on the country. You can appreciate these matters but they cannot who have never held a country in their hands or won a victory.

The commandments of religion were no less clear. God had told them in the Koran that the true believers would find their best friends among those who said : 'We are Christians'. The people of the Book (Christians, Jews and Mahommedans) would have more sympathy one for another than they would have for ideolaters. Loyalty to the Government which God has placed over them was a divine command. The Prophet has said, 'If God places over you a black negro slave as ruler you must obey him.'

This for almost 20 years has been the Mahommedan policy although upon two occasions the Mahommedans have been strongly tempted to take part in political demonstrations. In the first instance the Hindu attempted to prohibit the slaughter of kine to the detriment of all beef-eating communities, of which the Mahommedan is much the largest. The second instance will seem to Englishmen hardly less remote from politics, as understood in this country. Hindustani, the language of Northern India from Jabalpur to Lahore is the same when spoken by a Hindu or a Mahommedan, but the character or alphabet in which it is written varies with the religion of the writer; Mahommedans for the most part write in Persian from right to left and Hindus generally use the Deva Nagri of Hindi script from left to right. Owing to Mussulman ascendancy in the past many Hindus use both characters, and Persian is the most in use for literary purposes and until 1897 was the character recognised in the courts of Law. The Hindu persuaded the Lieutenant Governor of the U. P. to allow the permissive use of the Hindi character with the object, Mahommedan contended, of putting impediments in the way of Mahommedan lawyers. Upon the last occasion Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who had succeeded to much of the authority of Sir Syed,

was sorely pressed to take the lead in an agitation against the Government but he refused to be driven to extremes, and used his influence upon the side of moderate counsels. Now, however, a change appears to be impending. Mr. Morley's Budget speech and the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller have made the Mussulmans doubtful whether their interests are effectually safeguarded by a policy which makes it impossible for them to bring pressure upon Government. On 1 October, they are to lay their case before the Viceroy in the temperate manner which is traditional with them. The question at issue is whether the constitution of British India provides any safeguards, except those of noisy demonstration, for securing the rights of minorities. More than one course of action is open to the Mahommedan community, which cannot, however, be adequately discussed today; for them the question is important, as a new chapter in their political history may be opend by the interview which Lord Minto will accord them. But for the British Government the question is more important still; the Viceroy is called upon to decide whether in future encouragement is to be given to the forces of loyalty, or whether the loyal minorities are to be driven to make common cause with those who declare openly that they desire, in the words of a Calcutta Journal, 'to make Indian autonomous and absolutely free from British Control.'

Source : The Times, 26 September 1906.

14

THE TIMES ON MUSLIM DEPUTATION

On 1 October, a deputation representing the Mahommedan community throughout India is going to wait on the Viceroy and lay a statement before him covering their whole political positions and disabilities under which they believe themselves to be. It is to consist of thirty six delegates, all men of distinction, who have been elected by various Mahommedan centres for the purpose. It will form, in our Simla correspondent's opinion, the most representative deputation that has ever approached the Viceroy. But the influential character of the delegates, important as that is, is of less significance than the fact that they are waiting on the Viceroy at all. Their mission is a new departure. To appreciate what it means, we must go back twenty years and reflect what has been the political attitude steadily maintained by the Mahommedans during that space of time. Twenty years ago the party represented by the Indian National Congress was first coming into prominence. It was a question for the Mahommedans whether they should be drawn into

this mainly Hindu movement or whether they should stand aside. The commanding influence of their great reformer, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, practically decided the point. In 1887 he delivered a speech at Lucknow which raged the whole Mahommedan community against, or rather outside, the Congress. It was a frank appeal to the Mahommedan instincts of government and discipline in the kind of appeal which is seldom in vain. The ideal which Sir Syed traced out for his co-religionists was to devote their energy to education and the spread of enlightenment among their people; their political interests they might leave in the safe keeping of the Government. He stated his advice on the belief, which he expressed in so many words that 'the Government will examine our case impartially and do justice between us and the other people of India.' To the policy thus recommended the Mahommedans have consistently adhered. There have been times when they were strongly tempted to change it and resort to political agitation against the Government. But their influential leaders threw their weight into the other side and Sir Syed's policy of abstention continued to hold the field. It is only in the light of this long self-restraint that we can appreciate fully the deliberate way to which the Mahommedans, are now raising the question whether organised and active political effort has been forced upon them.

Their broad ground for re-opening this question is not far to seek. They have begun to realise the danger that the Congress party may be accepted as representative of all educated native opinion throughout India. It is true that a certain number of their co-religionists can be ranked as supporters of the Congress. But, broadly speaking, the Congress party is a Hindu party though its militant element represents only a limited section even among Hindus the Hinduism of the South, for instance, standing largely aloof. By their constant agitation, the Congress leaders have produced a marked impression both in India and at home, and gained an altogether disproportionate influence. This state of thing has not been lost upon the Mahommedans, who hold that already it has seriously affected their interests, and there is no doubt that recent events have confirmed them in this view. They felt very strongly on the question of Eastern Bengal, as was natural for a community which numbers two-thirds of the populations of the new provinces. True to their traditional policy, they refrained from noisy demostrations in favour of partition, but, when Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation was accepted by the Government, they broke silence for once, and complained bitterly of disregard shown to Mahommedan interests, and the injustice done to loyal Mahommedan subjects who had 'never joined or been in sympathy with the Hindu agitators'.

Mr. Morley's Budget speech seems also to have excited their anxiety. Admirable as that speech was, it was calculated to leave the impression that Mr. Morley accepted the Congress as practically standing for all educated native opinion. Thus at least, some passages might easily be construed by apprehensive minds, and all the more so because the three points of reform

which Mr. Morley announced as being under official consideration happens to stand in the way of the political programme of the Congress. But, though circumstances like these may have quickened Mahommedan anxiety, the movement of unrest among them springs not from any recent incident, but from a dissatisfaction with their general position which has been growing for some time. They resent the undue prominence of the Bengali politicians, the constant noisy agitation which he keeps up against the Government and the detrimental results to other native communities which are less vociferous but more loyal. No fair observer will deny that they have some grounds for this mistrust. In political aptitude of a somewhat shallow character the Hindu, on the whole, outstrips them, and he is a more versatile pupil of the West. But though he learns readily, good deal of the knowledge he carries away is purely superficial. In education he falls an easy pray to the examination system, a rank growth which has attained extraordinary luxuriance, in Bengal, as our recent article on Calcutta University reform will have shown. Undigested knowledge and unformed, unstable character are too often the fruits of this contact between the East and the West. The result is seen in the complexion of Bengali politics. There is great activity, with floods of speech, much irresponsible denunciation of Government, and a general tendency to take phrases and appearances for facts. Harmless as the majority of Hindu politicians may be it is not surprising that many of these excitable brains should run widely into virulent sedition. As sedition mongers they do a large amount of mischief, which becomes so serious that the insignificance of its author is forgotten. There are signs, it is true, that the disloyal extremists in the Congress have overreached themselves, and are on the eve of a decisive encounter with the moderate element and this may end in their discomfiture. But, in the meantime, the Congress party is still a power, and to non-Hindu Minorities it appears nothing short of a menace.

Numerically the Mahommedans are one of these minorities, and the fact that of their own will they have been politically silent has perhaps made us forgetful of their strength. But strong they are strong, first of all, in their possession of a single common language. The same Urdu speech draws Mahommedan leaders together everywhere, and binds them with a closeness unknown to the Hindus. The Mahommedans again, are strong in character. They owe this not merely to their traditions as a ruling race, nor to the fact, important as it is, that they count among their numbers the martial people of the North, but also in no small degree to the discipline of their creed, whatever else Mahommedan does or does not do, when it finds elements of strength in a character it makes them stronger. We cannot afford, therefore, to trifle with the feelings of such a people, even if the plainest considerations of good faith and policy bind us to a community so essentially loyal. If the forces of dissatisfaction are active in India, then it would be folly to estrange a great people who are on many grounds our natural supporters. It would be dangerous to us because of the hostile influence which may react on India from the outside

world. Islam counts millions of adherents outside our Empire, and the tie of religion, though subordinated to the tie of political loyalty, is never forgotten.

It happens that the policy pursued by the Sultan of Turkey has obliged us again and again to place ourselves in opposition to the will of the Sovereign whom most Mahommedans regard with great veneration as holder of the Khalifate. Our opponents make the most of this accident, and no pains are spared to impress on our loyal Mahommedan subjects that we are the enemies and oppressors of Islam. It is a baseless charge against which we must almost quote the authority of the Koran—the Koran, which bade Moslems look for their best friends among the other 'people of the Book.' But we must be prepared to deal with it, as with all those other mysterious under-currents, of feeling which agitate the Eastern world. So far as the Mahommedans of India are concerned, our only course is to show them plainly that they have not lost our sympathy, and that we value their loyalty and intelligent cooperation as much as ever. We can do this without detriment to other creeds and races. A simple but straight forward and sympathetic answer from the Viceroy to the Mahommedan deputation might do much to clear the air; the Mahommedans would unquestionably prize it and regard it as a charter. But we have now reached a stage where assurances will be quite valueless, unless they are backed up by deeds. If the Indian Government does not retain the confidence of Loyal minorities by a steady and consistent policy, then in words recently quoted in our columns, we may expect to see the Mahommedans 'either join the Congress or set up a second agitation of their own.'

Source : The Times, 26 September 1906.

15

THE SIMLA DEPUTATION : PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS TO LORD MINTO

1 October 1906

Availing ourselves of the permission accorded to us, we, the undersigned nobles, jagirdars, taluqdars, lawyers, zemindars, merchants and others representing a large body of the Mahommedan subjects of His Majesty the King-Emperor in different parts of India, beg most respectfully to approach your Excellency with the following address for your favourable consideration.

We fully realise and appreciate the incalculable benefits conferred by British rule on the teeming millions belonging to diverse races and professing

diverse religions who form the population of the vast continent of India, and have every reason to be grateful for the peace, security, personal freedom and liberty of worship that we now enjoy. Further, from the wise and enlightened character of the Government, we have every reasonable ground for anticipating that these benefits will be progressive and that India will in the future occupy an increasingly important position in the comity of nations.

One of the most important characteristics of British policy in India is the increasing deference that has so far as possible been paid from the first to the views and wishes of the people of the country in matters affecting their interests, with due regard always to the diversity of race and religion which forms such an important feature of all India progress.

CLAIMS OF THE COMMUNITY

Beginning with the confidential and unobtrusive method of consulting influential members of important communities in different parts of the country, this principle was gradually extended by the recognition of the right of recognised political or commercial organisations to communicate to the authorities their criticisms and views on measures of public importance, and finally by the nomination and election of direct representatives of the people in Municipalities, District Boards, and above all in the Legislative Chambers of the country. This last element is, we understand, about to be dealt with by the Committee appointed by Your Excellency with the view of giving it further extension, and it is with reference mainly to our claim to a fair share in such extended representation and some other matters of importance affecting the interests of our community, that we have ventured to approach your Excellency on the present occasion.

PAST TRADITIONS

The Mahommedans of India number, according to the census taken in the year 1901, over sixty-two million or between one-fifths and one-fourths of the total population of His Majesty's Indian dominions, and if a reduction be made for the uncivilised portions of the community enumerated under the heads of animist and other minor religions, as well as for those classes who are ordinarily classified as Hindus but properly speaking are not Hindus at all, the proportion of Mahommedans to the Hindu majority becomes much larger. We, therefore, desire to submit that under any system of representation extended or limited a community in itself more numerous than the entire population of any first class European power except Russia may justly lay claim to adequate recognition as an important factor in the State.

We venture, indeed, with Your Excellency's permission to go a step further, and urge that the position accorded to the Mahommedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence should be commensurate, not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance and the value of

the contribution which they make to the defence of the empire, and we also hope that your Excellency will in this connection be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than hundred years ago and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.

The Mahommedans of India have always placed implicit reliance on the sense of justice and love of fair dealing that have characterised their rulers, and have in consequence abstained from pressing their claims by methods that might prove at all embarrassing, but earnestly as we desire that the Mahommedans of India should not in the future depart from that excellent and time-honoured tradition, recent events have stirred up feelings, especially among the younger generation of Mahommedans, which might, in certain circumstances and under certain contingencies, easily pass beyond the control of temperate counsel and sober guidance.

We, therefore, pray that the representations we herewith venture to submit, after a careful consideration of the views and wishes of a large number of our co-religionists in all parts of India, may be favoured with your Excellency's earnest.

EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS

We hope your Excellency will pardon our stating at the outset that representative institutions of the European type are new to the Indian people; many of the most thoughtful members of our community in fact consider that the greatest care, forethought and caution will be necessary if they are to be successfully adapted to the social, religious and political conditions obtaining in India, and that in the absence of such care and caution their adoption is likely, among other evils, to place our national interests at the mercy of an unsympathetic majority. Since, however, our rulers have, in pursuance of the immemorial instincts and traditions, found it expedient to give these institutions and increasingly important place in the Government of the country, we Mahommedans cannot any longer in justice to our own national interests hold aloof from participating in the conditions to which their policy has given rise. While, therefore, we are bound to acknowledge with gratitude that such representation as the Mahommedans of India have hitherto enjoyed has been due to a sense of justice and fairness on the part of your Excellency and your illustrious predecessor in office and the heads of Local Government by whom the Mahommedan members of Legislative Chambers have almost without exception been nominated, we cannot help observing that the representation thus accorded to us has necessarily been inadequate to our requirements, and has not always carried with it the approval of those whom the nominees were selected to represent. This state of things was probably under existing circumstances unavoidable, for while on the one hand the number of nominations reserved to the Viceroy and Local Governments has necessarily been strictly limited the selection on the other hand of really representative men

has, in the absence of any reliable method of ascertaining the direction of popular choice, been far from easy.

THE RESULTS OF ELECTION

As for the results of election, it is most unlikely that the name of any Mahommedan candidate will ever be submitted for the approval of Government by the electoral bodies as now constituted unless he is in sympathy with the majority in all matters of importance. Nor can we in fairness find fault with the desire of our non-Muslim fellow-subjects to take full advantage of their strength and vote only for members of their own community, or for persons who, if not Hindus, are expected to vote with the Hindu majority on whose goodwill they would have to depend for their future re-election. It is true that we have many and important interests in common with our Hindu fellow-countrymen and it will always be a matter of the utmost satisfaction to us to see these interests safeguarded by the presence in our Legislative Chambers of able supporters of these interests, irrespective of their nationality.

A DISTINCT COMMUNITY

Still, it cannot be denied that we Mahommedans are a distinct community with additional interests of our own which are not shared by other communities, and these have hitherto suffered from the fact that they have not been adequately represented. Even in the provinces in which the Mahommedans constitute a distinct majority of the population, they have too often been treated as though they were inappreciably small political factors that might without unfairness be neglected. This has been the case, to some extent, in the Punjab, but in a more marked degree in Sind and in Eastern Bengal.

Before formulating our views with regard to the election of representatives, we beg to observe that the political importance of a community to a considerable extent gains strength or suffers detriment according to the position that the members of that community occupy in the service of the State. If, as is unfortunately the case with the Mahommedans, they are not adequately represented in this manner, they lose in the prestige and influence which are justly their due.

EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE

We, therefore, pray that Government will be graciously pleased to provide that both in the gazetted and the subordinate and ministerial services of all Indian provinces a due proportion of Mahommedans shall always find place. Orders of like import have at times been issued by Local Governments in some provinces, but have not, unfortunately, in all cases been strictly observed on the ground that qualified Mahommedans were not forthcoming. This allegation, however, well-founded it may have been at one time, is, we submit, no longer tenable now, and wherever the will to employ them is not wanting the supply of qualified Mahommedans, we are happy to be able to

assure Your Excellency, is equal to the demand.

THE COMPETITIVE ELEMENT

Since, however, the number of qualified Mahommedans has increased, a tendency is unfortunately perceptible to reject them of the ground of relatively superior qualifications having to be given precedence. This introduces something like the competitive element in its worst form, and we may be permitted to draw Your Excellency's attention to the political significance of the monopoly of all official influence by one class. We may also point out in this connection that the efforts of Mahommedan educationists have from the very outset of the educational movement among them been strenuously directed towards the development of character, and this we venture to think is of greater importance than mere mental alertness in the making of good public servants.

MAHOMMEDANS ON THE BENCH

We venture to submit that the generality of Mahommedans in all parts of India feel aggrieved that Mahommedan Judges are not more frequently appointed to the High Courts and Chief Courts of Judicature. Since the creation of these Courts only three Mahommedan Lawyers have held these honourable appointments, all of whom have fully justified their elevation to the Bench. At the present moment there is not a single Mahommedan Judge sitting on the Bench of any of these Courts, while three Hindu Judges in the Calcutta High Court, where the proportion of Mahommedans in the population is very large, and two in the Chief Court of the Punjab, where the Mahommedans form the majority of the population. It is not, therefore, an extravagant request on our part that a Mahommedan should be given a seat on the Bench of each of the High Courts and Chief Courts. Qualified Mahommedan lawyers eligible for these appointments can always be found, if not in one province then in another. We beg permission further to submit that the presence on the Bench of these Courts of a Judge learned in the Mahommedan Law will be a source of considerable strength to the administration of justice.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION

As Municipal and District Boards have to deal with important local interests affecting to a great extent the health, comfort, educational needs and even the religious concerns of the inhabitants, we shall, we hope, be pardoned if we solicit for a moment Your Excellency's attention to the position of Mahommedans thereon before passing to higher concerns. These institutions form, as it were, the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government and it is here that the principle of representation is brought home intimately to the intelligence of the people, yet the position of Mahommedans on these Boards is not at present regulated by any guiding principle capable of general application, and practice varies in different localities. The Aligarh Municipality, for example, is divided into six wards and each ward returns one Hindu and one

Mahommedan Commissioner, and the same principle we understand is adopted in a number of Municipalities in the Punjab and elsewhere, but in a good many places the Mahommedan tax-payers are not adequately represented. We would, therefore, respectfully suggest that the local authority should in every case be required to declare the number of Hindus and Mahommedans entitled to seats on Municipal and District Boards, such proportion to be determined in accordance with the numerical strength, social status, local influence and special requirements of either community. Once their relative proportion is authoritatively determined, we would suggest that either community should be allowed severally to return their own representatives as is the practice in many towns in the Punjab.

FELLOWS OF UNIVERSITIES

We would also suggest that the Senates and Syndicates of Indian Universities might be similarly dealt with, that is to say, there should, so far as possible, be an authoritative declaration of the proportion in which Mahommedans are entitled to be represented in either body.

NOMINATION TO PROVINCIAL COUNCILS

We now proceed to the consideration of the question of our representation in the Legislative Chambers of the country. Beginning with the Provincial Councils, we would most respectfully suggest that as in the case of Municipalities and District Boards the proportion of Mahommedan representatives entitled to seats should be determined and declared with due regard to the important consideration which we have ventured to point out in paragraph 5 of this address, and that the important Mahommedan land-owners, lawyers, merchants and representatives of other important interests, the Mahommedan members of District Boards and Municipalities and the Mahommedan graduates of universities of a certain standing, say five years, should be formed into Electoral Colleges and be authorised, in accordance with such rules of procedure as Your Excellency's Government may be pleased to prescribe in that behalf, to return the number of members that may be declared to be eligible.

THE VICEROY'S COUNCIL

With regard to the Imperial Legislative Council whereon the due representation of Mahommedan interests is a matter of vital importance, we crave leave to suggest (1) that in the cadre of the Council the proportion of Mahommedan representatives should not be determined on the basis of the numerical strength of the community, and that in any case the Mahommedan representatives should never be an ineffective minority; (2) that as far as possible, appointment by election should be given preference over nomination; (3) that for the purposes of choosing Mahommedan members, Mahommedan landowners, lawyers, merchants and representatives of other important

interests of a status to be subsequently determined by your Excellency's Government, Mahommedan members of the provincial Councils and Mahommedan fellows of universities should be invested with electoral powers to be excercised in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed by your Excellency's Government in that behalf.

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

An impression has lately been gaining ground that one or more Indian Members may be appointed on the Executive Council of the Viceroy. In the event of such appointment being made we beg that the claims of Mahommedans in that connection may not be overlooked. More than one Mahommedan, we venture to say, will be found in the country fit to serve with distinction in that august chamber.

A MAHOMMEDAN UNIVERSITY

We beg to approach your Excellency on a subject which must closely affect our national welfare. We are convinced that our aspirations as a community and our future progress are largely dependent on the foundation of a Mahommedan University which will be the centre of our religious and intellectual life. We, therefore, most respectfully pray that your Excellency will take steps to help us in an undertaking in which our community is so deeply interested.

In conclusion, we beg to assure your Excellency that in assisting the Mahommedan subjects of His majesty at this stage in the development of Indian affairs in the directions indicated in the present address, your Excellency will be strengthening the basis of their unswerving loyalty to the Throne and laying the foundation of their political advancement and national prosperity, and your Excellency's name will be remembered with gratitude by their posterity for generations to come, and we feel confident that your Excellency will be gracious enough to give due consideration to our prayers. We have the honour to subscribe ourselves, Your Excellecy's most obedient and humble servants.

LORD MINTO'S REPLY TO THE SIMLA DEPUTATION

Your Highness and gentlemen, allow me, before I attempt to reply to the many considerations your address embodies, to welcome you heartily to Simla. Your presence here today is very full of meaning. To the document with which you have presented me are attached the signatures of nobles, of Ministers of various States, of great landowners, of lawyers, of merchants, and of many other of His Majesty's Mahommedan subjects. I welcome the representative character of your deputation as expressing the views and aspirations of the enlightened Muslim community of India. I feel that all

you have said emanates from a representative body basing its opinions on a matured consideration of the existing political conditions of India, totally apart from the small personal or political sympathies and antipathies of scattered localities, and I am grateful to you for the opportunity you are affording me of expressing my appreciation of the just aims of the followers of Islam, and their determination to share in the political history of our Empire. As your Viceroy I am proud of the recognition you express of the benefits conferred by British rule on the diverse races of many creeds which go to form the population of this huge continent. You yourselves, the descendants of a conquering and ruling race, have told me today of your gratitude for the personal freedom the liberty of worship, the general peace and the hopeful future which British administration has secured for India. It is interesting to look back on early British efforts to assist the Mahommedan population to qualify themselves for the public service. In 1782 Warren Hastings founded the Calcutta Madrassah, with the intention of enabling its students 'to compete on more equal terms with the Hindus for employment under Government.' In 1811 my ancestor Lord Minto advocated improvements in the Madrassah and the establishment of Mahommedan Colleges at other places throughout India. In later years the efforts of the Mahommedan Association led to the Government Resolution of 1885 dealing with the educational position of the Mahommedan educational effort has culminated in the College of Aligarh, that great institution which the noble and broad-minded devotion of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan—(applause)—has dedicated to his co-religionists. It was in July 1877, that Lord Lytton laid the foundation-stone of Aligarh, when Sir Syed Ahmed Khan addressed these memorable words to the Viceroy : 'The personal honour which you have done me assures me of a great fact, and fills me with feelings of a much higher nature than mere personal gratitude. I am assured that you who upon this occasion represent the British rule have sympathy with our labours. To me this assurance is very valuable and a source of great happiness. At my time of life it is a comfort to me feel that the undertaking which has been for many years and is now the sole object of my life, has roused on the one hand the energies of my own countrymen, and on the other has won the sympathy of our British fellow-subjects, and the support of our rulers, so that when the few years I may still be spared are over, and when I shall be no longer amongst you, the College will still prosper and succeed in educating my countrymen to have the same affection for their country, the same feelings of loyalty for the British rule, the same appreciation of its blessings, the same sincerity of friendship with our British fellow-subjects as have been the ruling feelings of my life.' (applause). Aligarh has won its laurels, its students have gone forth to fight the battle of life strong in the tenets of their own religion, strong in the precepts of loyalty and patriotism, and now when there is much that is critical future of India the inspiration of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the teachings of Aligarh shine forth brilliantly in the pride of Mahommedan

history, in the loyalty, commonsense, and sound reasoning so eloquently expressed in your address.

But, gentlemen, you go on to tell me that sincere as your belief is in the justice and fair dealings of your rulers, and unwilling as you are to embarrass them at the present moment you cannot but be aware that recent events have stirred up feelings amongst the younger generation of Mahommedans which might pass beyond the control of the temperate counsel and sober guidance. Now I have no intention of entering into any discussion upon the affairs of Eastern Bengal and Assam, yet, I hope that without offence to any one I may thank the Mahommedan community of the new Province for the moderation and self-restraint they have shown their under conditions which were new to them and as to which there has been inevitably much misunderstanding, and that I may, at the same time, sympathise with all that is sincere in Bengali sentiments. But above all what I would ask you to believe is that the course the Viceroy and the Government of India have pursued in connection with the affairs of the new Province—the future of which is now I hope assured—(applause)—has been dictated solely by a regard for what has appeared best for its present and future populations as a whole, irrespective of race or creed, and that the Mahommedan community of Eastern Bengal and Assam can rely as firmly as ever on British justice and fair play for the appreciation of its loyalty and the safeguarding of its interests.

You have addressed me, gentlemen, at a time when the political atmosphere is full of change. We all feel it would be foolish to attempt to deny its existence. Hopes and ambitions new to India are making themselves felt; we cannot ignore them, we should be wrong to wish to do so. But to what is all this unrest due ? Not to the discontent of misgoverned millions—I defy anyone honestly to assert that; not to any uprising of a disaffected people. It is due to that educational growth in which only a very small portion of the population has yet shared, of which British rule first sowed the seed, and the fruits of which British rule now doing its best to foster and to direct. There may be many taxes in the harvest we are now reaping, the Western grain which we have sown may not be entirely suitable to the requirements of the people of India, but the educational harvest will increase as years go on, and the healthiness of the nourishment it gives will depend on the careful administration and distribution of its product. You need not ask my pardon, gentlemen, for telling me that 'representative institutions of the European type are entirely new to the people of India' or that their introduction here requires the most earnest thought and care. I should be very far from welcoming all the political machinery of the Western world amongst the hereditary instincts and traditions of eastern races. Western breadth of thought, the teachings of Western Civilization, the freedom of British individuality, can do much for the people of India. But I recognise with you that they must not carry with them an impracticable insistance on the acceptance of political methods. (Applause).

And now, gentlemen, I come to your own position in respect to the political future; the position of the Mahommedan Community for whom you speak. You will, I feel sure, recognise that it is impossible for me to follow you through any detailed consideration of the conditions and the share that community has a right to claim in the administration of public affairs : I can at present only deal with generalities. The points which you have raised are before the Committee which, as you know, I have lately appointed to consider the question of representation, and I will take care that your address is submitted to them. But at the same time I hope I may be able to reply to the general tenor of your remarks without in any way forestalling the Committee's report. The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that in any system of representation—whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation—the Mahommedan Community should be represented as a community, you point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that if by chance they did so it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community whom he would in no way represent; and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. (Applause). Please do not misunderstand me, I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. (Applause). The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representative institutions, I agree with you gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the Municipal and District Boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political rights and interests as a community will be safe-guarded in any administrative organisation with which I am concerned, and that you and the people of India may rely upon the British Raj to respect, as it has been its pride to do, the religious beliefs and the national traditions of the myriads composing the population of His Majesty's Indian Empire. (Applause).

Your Highness and gentlemen, I sincerely thank you for the unique opportunity your deputation has given me of meeting so many distinguished and representative Mahommedans. I deeply appreciate the energy and interest in public affairs which have brought you here from great distances, and I only regret that your visit to Simla is necessarily so short.

Source : Struggle for Independence 1857-1947, Pakistan Publication, Karachi, Appendix II.

16

LETTER FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO HARE
2 October 1906

The Deputation have gone off quite pleased with the Address and His Excellency's reply. It was a really big thing. They were all nervous as to the reception they would meet with and the answer they would get—your men especially. They seemed to have an idea ... that the Partition may yet be undone, but H. E.'s allusion to 'the future of the new Province' reassured them.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

17

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO (PRIVATE)
5 October 1906

... Your address was admirable alike in spirit, in the choice of topics, and in the handling. As I told you by telegraph yesterday it has been thoroughly appreciated here by the press, and by people—I wish they were more of them who take interest in our Indian things .... It will be interesting to see how our Hindu friends take it. Any how, you have done a valuable day's work, whatever the future produce.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1906.

18

LETTER FROM MAULVI SYED MEHDEE ALLY KHAN TO DUNLOP SMITH
7 October 1906

You will allow me, on behalf of the members of the Deputation, to assure you that His Excellency's great speech in reply to the Address,

embodying, as it does, a clear and sympathetic recognition of the rights of the Mahommedans of India, as a distinct community based on a generous appreciation of their political importance as being inferior to that of no others, has put a new heart in us, and will always, with gratitude, be treasured by us and our posterity as a historic declaration of the policy of the Indian Government.

I also take this opportunity of expressing to you our sincere thanks for the valuable help that you rendered in ensuring the success of the Deputation and for the considerateness with which you consulted our convenience and wishes in all the arrangements that were made on the occasion, not the least pleasant feature of which was the garden party in the afternoon, enabling us to appreciate the gracious courtesy of their Excellencies and to meet the distinguished members of the Government and other high officials.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

19

LETTER FROM SIR ARTHUR GODLEY, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO MINTO

12 October 1906

...It was, if I may say so, an excellent performance, and has produced an admirable effect here. It will do no end of good.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

20

LETTER FROM MORLEY TO MINTO

26 October 1906

All that you tell me of your Mahommedans is full of interest for me and I only regret that I could not have moved about unseen at your garden party What a difference from your life and work at Ottawa. The whole thing has been as good as it could be, and it stamps your authority and personal position decisively.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

21

THE MAHOMMEDAN MEMORIAL : PRESS COMMENTS

I

To-day the leaders of the Mahommedan community are to wait upon the Viceroy and lay before him a memorial on behalf of their people. The manner in which they are presenting their case, no less than the nature of their proposals, is in sharp contrast with the demonstrations by which certain Hindu politicians in Calcutta have attempted to influence the course of public affairs. The Hindu leader, Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, has tried to secure his political ends by organizing a display of hostility to Government; where that hostility did not exist it has been his object to create it; since the people of India take, as a rule, but little interest in purely political questions. Mr. Banerjee, in order to secure a show of popular support, has been driven to make an appeal to religious prejudice and to connect his political programme with the Hindu's veneration for the cow and the Mahommedan's abomination of the pig; from the greased cartridges of the Mutiny we know how disastrously effective such appeals may be, and all sober men in India deplore the use of such dangerous political weapons. The Mahommedan leaders have taken a very different course; seriously as they believe the interests of their community to have been injured by the events of the last six months they have abstained from making appeals to the inflamable prejudices of their coreligionists; they have not had recourse to the vituperation of Government nor have they attempted to embarrass the administration. Soon after Mr. Morley's proposal to extend the popular representation on the Viceroy's Council was known in India, they sought the permission of Lord Minto to place their views before him in a memorial, and when that permission was obtained they elected delegates from the different centres of Mahommedan population in India in order that the Government might be under no misapprehension as to the representative character of the deputation. To judge from an early draft of the memorial which has been received in England the language of that document is not less weighty and dignified than the matter is important.

The Mahommedan leaders focus attention upon one principle which well deserves Lord Minto's careful consideration; that principle is that, in view of the religious and racial differences by which Indian society is at present divided, representation should be by communities and should not be left to the hazard of election by the numerical majority. The memorialists do not confine their attention to representation upon the Viceroy's Council, though the expansion of that council suggested by Mr. Morley in his Budget speech is the ostensible reason of the deputation, but they pass in review the

different bodies—the municipalities, the district boards, the senates of the Universities, and the Provincial Councils—by which the people of India are given an opportunity of expressing their views and their wishes. In all these deliberative assemblies the Mahommedans desire that a certain proportion of Place should be reserved for each community; as the Mahommedans constitute almost one quarter of the population of India, they submit, that, in the cadre of the Imperial Legislative Council, one member out of every four should always be a Mahommedan, and that in the other assemblies the local Governments shal' declare the proportion of Mahommedan representatives entitled to a seat. Within these limits, which they leave to the Government to determine, the Mahommedans desire that the selection of representatives be left to the choice of the people themselves.

The leaders of the Mahommedan community have never professed to be much enamoured with representative institutions of the European type, which are entirely opposed to the political traditions of the East, but they recognize that England intends to create such institutions in India and like sensible men, they are prepared to accept this decision and only demand that representative institutions should be adapted to the special circumstances of their country. The special circumstances in which India differs from England are that religion and race form the basis of political parties, and that as the Mahommedans, the Christians, and the Parsis are numerically fewer than the Hindus they will always poll fewer votes than the Hindu party, and will hardly ever be able to secure the return of a representative of their own; they will thus never be able to secure representation upon the Imperial or Provincial Councils proportionate to their numbers still less to their importance in the country.

The Mahommedan memorialists have wisely confined themselves to a statement of their own case, but it may here be pointed out that the principle for which they contend is almost indispensable to the working of representative institutions in India. We have the experience of municipal elections to prove that, where election is unrestricted, Hindu and Mahommedan parties are inevitably formed, religious animosity is excited by every contested election, and the relations of the two communities are embittered by the representative institutions; where, as in the case of Aligarh, cited by the memorialists, a certain number of seats is allotted to each community and the electors are thus prevented from expressing any religious preference, representative institutions work fairly well and the greatest stumbling block to popular government in India is removed. So apparent is this in India that it is sometimes whispered that the Government introduces popular elections in obedience to the maxim *divide et impera* : this, of course, is not true, but it is certain that the failure of local self-government in the Punjab and United Provinces is principally due to the religious dissensions which result from unrestricted election. If Englishmen honestly desire to introduce popular representation into India, the principle for which the Mahommedan

memorialists contend must be accepted; if it is neglected, the strife between rival communities will be kept burning and the era of absolute Government indefinitely prolonged.

The immediate concern of the Mahommedans, however, is that the rights of minorities, which were safeguarded by the impartiality of the autocracy, should not be jeopardized by an extention of popular liberties. They recognize very frankly that they cannot find fault with the Hindus for taking full advantage of their numerical strength and voting only for members of their own community; they also admit that they have many and important interests in common with their Hindu fellow-countrymen; they maintain, however, that they have additional interests of their own, and that these cannot be adequately represented except by members of their own community. The Hindu leaders of the Congress party are fond of repeating that Hindu and Mahommedan interests do not clash, and they have frequently asserted that they themselves will be very watchful of Mahommedan interests when representative institutions have been secured; but the Mahommedans have always asked for some guarantee that these promises will be fulfilled. If the leaders of the Congress party are honestly convinced that there is no difference of interest between Hindus and Mahommedans, they can have no objection to the principle of proportional representation; if Hindus and Mahommedans are alike members of one Indian nation no harm can ensue from securing, by the Constitution, the presence of a certain number of Mahommedans in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils. There thus appears to be three strong arguments in favour of the principal contention of the Mahommedan memorial— (1) it is the duty of the Government to protect the rights of the minority; (2) representation by communities is necessary for the success of representative institutions in India; (3) it is not inconsistent with the demands of the Hindu majority if, as is asserted, the Congress does represent Indian opinion.

For another reason the Mahommedan memorial is a remarkable document; it is almost the only piece of original political thought which has emanated from modern India. All the proposals which have been put forward from time to time by the Congress are unimaginative reproductions of the ideas which from the stock-in-trade of English politicians and the hackneyed arguments which, though they have lost something of their freshness to us, do yet bear some relation to the facts of actual life in England are transferred with hardly the modification of a word to the alien environment of Calcutta, and we are asked to believe that they are in absolute harmony with the political aspirations of an Oriental people who have lived under an absolute Government since the dawn of history. Nothing has made the average Englishman as sceptical of the wisdom of the Congress as this absence of Indian colouring in its political programme. The Hindu politicians have made no attempt to develop Indian institutions so as to satisfy modern needs; they have not based their reforms upon any political instinct or

proclivity manifested by the people of India in the past. They have imported their political programme ready made from England, and warm as is an Englishman's regard for his own Constitution, he has a shrewd suspicion that it cannot be grafted on to an Indian stem. Mr. Morley gave expression to the instinctive feelings of us all when he said that the idea of transplanting British institutions wholesale into India was a fantastic and ludicrous dream. 'You have got', he said, 'to adapt your institutions to the conditions of the country where you are planting them.' This is what the Mahommedans have realized; their memorial contains the first practical suggestion that has been made by any considerable Indian party for adapting British institutions to the conditions of India.

II

The Mahommedan deputation elected by their co-religionists throughout India, and representative of their community as no deputation has ever been before, laid their case before Lord Minto yesterday and received his answer. It was one of those occasions when great issues are at stake, and when a mistake in policy, or even mere want of imagination, may work harm which the most honest efforts will be afterwards powerless to undo. The Viceroy's speech, however, gave evidence that he fully appreciated the situation. It was worthy both of the importance of the occasion and of his own position as representative of the Crown. Its tone throughout was one of frank and intelligent sympathy with his Mahommedan hearers, and he made it clear that he realized the significance of their action. The deputation, as we pointed out the other day, is a thing quite unprecedented in the recent history of the Indian Mahommedans. It is a departure from twenty years of political quietism, twenty years during which the Mahommedans faithfully kept Sir Syed Ahmed's advice not to let themselves be drawn into the current of agitation. Though they have now entered on organized political action, they are still perfectly true to the spirit of his counsel. It is characteristic of their point of view that, when they felt some steps had to be taken, agitation against the Government was the last thing they thought of. They made no attempt to influence religious prejudice or political passion against British rule, like the Hindu agitators of Bengal. Instead of that, they took a course which is in itself no small proof of their fitness for political responsibility. They sought the Government's permission to lay their views before it, elected a thoroughly representative deputation, and then urged their case with a breadth and moderation which would be striking in any country or society. Lord Minto is evidently alive to the signification of this. He welcomed the representative character of their gathering and referred to their past in language which must have gone straight to their hearts. Without making any detailed reference to the late controversy, he thanked the Mahommedans in the new province of Eastern Bengal for the Self restraint they had shown in new and trying

circumstances. He did something which will be even more welcome to the Mahommedans than this. He gave an explicit pledge to their community in Eastern Bengal that they could rely as firmly as ever on British justice and fair play; and in his remark that the future of the province 'is now' I hope, assured 'we may read the determination of the Government not to go back on the policy of partition. But still more important were the closing words of his speech, which contained a pledge just as explicit, to the whole Mahommedan community of India, that their political rights and interests will be safeguarded in any administrative reorganisation and throughout the general policy of the British Raj.

It was, of course, not the Viceroy's business to go into details yesterday as to how the political interests of the Mahommedans could best be assured. He made no attempt to do so, but he said enough to show them that their own proposal commands not only his sympathy, but, in principle, his adherence. What the Mahommedans propose was very lucidly explained in our article on 'Indian Affairs' yesterday. They want representation as a community, in all cases to which representation applies, from municipalities and district boards up to the Imperial Legislative Council. They suggest this solution as being the only effective means of safeguarding minorities, and as the only possible way of working representative institutions in India. It is with this last point that we get to the strength of their proposal. The Mahommedan idea was fairly described in our article as almost the only piece of original political thought which has emanated from modern India. The Bengali politicians have not really got to far. They have not got beyond the idea of importing the whole scheme of British politics ready made. This is substantially the process which Mr. Morley, in his Budget speech, denounced as a fantastic and ludicrous dream. It is, or it ought to be, a fantastic dream to suppose that we can ever graft our political institutions unchanged on to the hoary antiquity of India. It has so far remained a dream that the Congress party have not succeeded in transplanting much beyond our political vituperation, inflamed by occasional outbursts of disloyalty and appeals to religious passion. The Mahommedan theory is quite a different one. It is based on this solid fact—that the principle of representation by merely numerical majorities is not found workable in India.

Where this principle is applied, minorities go to the wall. Parties are organized, as parties in India must be, purely on religious or racial lines, and the election becomes a religious or racial welfare, in which the creed or race that is numerically strong triumphs, to the total exclusion of the creed or race that is weak. That is why local Self-Government has been a failure in so many cases, and that is why real political progress is impossible until a truer principle is applied.

This principle the Mahommedans are endeavouring to apply. In doing so they are not merely doing the best for their own creed; they are taking a line which must interest every body, and which may have the most desirable

effects on the whole political development of India. Of Lord Minto's attitude they have certainly no reason to complain. He says that as regards their claim to be estimated not merely by numbers but as a community, he is entirely, in accord with them. While not indicating details, he declares himself as firmly convinced as they that 'any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement, regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this Continent.' The immediate question raised by the Mahommedans will go before the committee lately appointed to consider representative changes, from which we trust it will get sympathetic consideration. That much, however, is practically assured by Lord Minto's reply, which fully endorsed the soundness of the Mahommedan proposal. On another point, a point of method, the Viceroy was in agreement with his hearers. He thinks, as they do, that Self-Government must begin far down, and that its 'initial rungs' are to be looked for in the municipal and district boards. In other words, the Indian people must educate themselves politically in small things before heavier responsibilities are laid on them. At present the Indian politician has unlimited chances of criticism, and little or no opportunity of learning what political responsibility really means. The Political education of a people cannot be carried on under such conditions. Municipal Self-Government, on the other hand, as was pointed out a few weeks ago in these columns, gives a definite field of training, which may be made really useful, if the municipal bodies are emancipated from the excessive official control that still prevails. By this means something can be done to teach political knowledge to India, and, indirectly to get rid of some of the less desirable results of our imported Western education. Western culture was bound, in any case, to produce a ferment when applied to Eastern brains, and in India we have too often been content with a merely superficial method. The moral fruits of that system have been less perceptible than the intellectual, and we can best redress the balance by fostering a sense of civic responsibility.

Source : The Times, 2 October 1906.

22

THE PIONEER ON THE MAHOMMEDAN DEPUTATION

Lord Minto has done all that was possible for a cautious and judicious Viceroy to do in his reply to the deputation of Mahommedans which waited upon him on Monday. He received the distinguished representatives of the

great Mahommedan race with a kindly personal courtesy which demonstrated how sincerely his sympathies are given to them in all the reasonable claims put forward on behalf of their community, and in his graceful reply there is the fullest assurance of most careful consideration being given to every detail of their suggestions. The deputation could not have looked for or desired a warmer acknowledgment of the loyalty and respect for law, which have been marked characteristics of the Mahommedan community, than the Viceroy gave utterance to in the course of his speech. It will be observed that he took occasion to reaffirm the unalterable character of the change recently made in the administrative organisation of Bengal and Assam, and this, in the face of bombastic and boastful demonstrations which have taken place recently, ought to convince everyone that the British Government is not trembling at the name of Surendranath Banerjee. Whatever doubts or misapprehensions may have arisen of late should be dissipated by words which Lord Minto uttered as the representative of the King-Emperor in no perfunctory or conventional manner, but with a real and most earnest desire to reassure the Mahommedan population and to convey to them the thanks of the British Government and people for an attitude which has done much to strengthen the feeling of common interest and common pride in all that concerns the security, the happiness, and the moral and material progress of India. We have read the address presented to His Excellency with feelings of entire satisfaction. It sets forth clearly the position of the Mahommedans in India and asks no more on their behalf than they are fully entitled to expect if any changes are to be made in the constitution of the representative institutions by which the responsible Government endeavours to ascertain the wishes of the people. It is quite true that while the Mahommedans do not number more than sixty-two millions, or between one-fifth and one-fourth of the entire population of the Indian dominion, they represent a much greater force in the life of the Empire than these figures may seem to indicate. If from the remainder we deduct the uncivilised portions of the community, for whom no race or religion has a specific right to speak and over whom the Government must for many years continue to exercise a strictly paternal form of control, the Mahommedans rise at once in the scale of importance. If, further, we recognise the share they take in the defence of the Empire, another, and certainly not an insignificant addition, must be made to the weight which ought to be attached to their views. They are entitled to a share in the office held under the central and local governments and in the judicial service much greater than has hitherto been assigned to them, and they have a right to ask that on the various legislative and advisory councils of the State their representation shall be duly proportioned to the strength, the influence and the intelligence which they contribute to the common total of the community.

This, and no more, is what has been asked for in the address presented to Lord Minto. While there is much discussion of the problem of representation, Mahommedans recognise the danger of their rights and interests being

overlooked. The conditions which exist in India are not the same as those that may be found in Western nations to which the principles of representative government have been applied. In England, in France and in Germany, and even in Japan, the only Oriental nation which has entered the circle of states in which popular government has taken root, the racial differences and the religious antagonisms are trivial by comparison with those which exist in India. We rescued the country from perpetual strife and bloodshed, due in the main to these differences, and the evidence of them has almost disappeared under the strong, firm influence of a Government which treats all with perfect equality, and refuses to look with more favour upon one than upon others. But there could be no greater mistake than to suppose that the disappearance of visible evidence of antagonism means that the antagonisms themselves are dead, or that they have ceased to be forces which it is necessary to take account of in organising the method of government in the country. If purely Western methods of election and representation were introduced, they would revive with startling rapidity. It is true that in the local elections, Mahommedans have occasionally secured election in part by Hindu votes; but, as the address points out, this has been done by sinking creed and individuality described as representative of their Mahommedan brethren. Under any system which carried the theory of impartiality to the absurd extreme of endeavouring to ignore all racial distinctions, the Mahommedan community would be swamped, and its influences already too slight, would be reduced to nothing. It would be impossible for a strong, capable race to submit to such conditions. The count of heads would not be accepted by them any more than such a count would satisfy the European portion of the Indian community. It is justly remarked in the address presented to Lord Minto that institutions which are entirely new to the Indian people must be introduced with the greatest care, fore thought and caution lest interests, which it is the obvious duty of the rulers to protect, be placed 'at the mercy of an unsympathetic majority'. Broadly, the proposals to this end made by the deputation are that in all local and other representative bodies the proportion of Mahommedan representation should be definitely fixed and not left to the haphazard or promiscuous election. For representation on the Imperial Legislative Council it is asked that in the cadre of the Council the number of the Hindus, and that as far as possible appointment by election should be given preference over nomination. Choice of Mahommedan representatives might be made by the Jagirdars, Talukdars, Zamindars, eminent citizens, members of provincial councils, Mahommedan Fellows of Universities and other specially invested with electoral powers, who would possess obvious educational and social qualifications and knowledge of the wants of the Mahommedan community, fully qualifying them to act on its behalf.

These are far-reaching proposals which it would be foolish indeed to pronounce a judgment upon before their full effects have been carefully thought-

out and examined. It is sufficient for the moment to say that in the main they follow sound and reasonable lines. The fact is obvious to all reasonable men that two broad principles must be followed in any changes made for the purpose of placing the Government upon a more representative basis. The first is that there must be recognition of the great racial and religious distinctions which make it impossible to reduce the whole population to a common classification; the second is that any system of election must be founded upon a narrow franchise, the tests for which shall be educational and social, as well as on the basis of property. The recognition of these two principles takes us a very long way towards the suggestions which the Mahommedan deputation has laid before Lord Minto, and we cannot harbour a doubt that they will receive the very careful attention of the Secretary of State, to whose initiative much of the discussion now going on is due. If he recognises the practical obstacles which stand in the way of any great 'step forward', he will be ready to weigh carefully and sympathetically the proposals which are being made to ensure that no false movement shall imperil the future of Indian administration. The Mahommedans have pointed out that they do not ask for changes, and are content to live without Western innovations. They have never pressed their claims by offensive or embarrassing methods of political agitation as others have done and are doing. It would be to the eternal discredit of British rule if this absence of turbulent action on their part were made an excuse for neglecting in the slightest degree to do full justice to all their claims 'at this fluid stage in the development of Indian affairs'. But there is no danger of such a thing. The case put forward with admirable moderation and great eloquence and skill is strong enough to command most generous attention solely on its own merits, and the British rulers of India are wise enough to see the prudence and also the justice of reciprocating, by all possible means, the admirable spirit of the address, and of giving effect to the wishes of those who presented it whenever it is possible to make any material changes in the conditions under which the country is governed. Mahommedans need have no fear that their identity will be swallowed up in a meaningless mass vote created by political theorists, or that their rights and liberties will ever be entrusted to the caprice of an antagonistic majority. It is the first duty of British rule to see that the rights of every race are protected, and the first failure will not be made in the case of those whose loyalty is one of the greatest bulwark of the Indian Empire.

Source : The Pioneer, 3 October 1906.

23

REUTER'S SPECIAL SERVICE ON SIMLA DEPUTATION

Lord Minto to-day received the Mahommedan deputation appointed to present to His Excellency the great address of the Mahommedan community of India.

The deputation itself is the most influential and representative body of Mahommedans which ever approached the Government of India. It was headed by His Highness the Agha Khan, and consisted of thirty-six members representating every province and every branch of the educated Moslem community.

The address gratefully acknowledged the peace, security, and liberty of the persons, and of worship, conferred by the British Government, emphasising the fact that one of the most important characteristics of British rule was the deference paid to the views and wishes of all the races and religions of India. It stated that the object of the deputation was to present the claim of sixty-two millions of Mahommedans to a fair share in any modified system of representation which might be contemplated, such share to be commensurate with their numbers and political importance. Representative institutions of the European type, the address declared, were new to Indians, and in the absence of the greatest caution, dangerous to their national interests. It deprecated any system of individual enfranchisement, and complained of the monopoly of official influence by one class pointing out that no Mahommedan judge sat in any supreme court. Continuing, the address urged the need of a Mahommedan university, and insisted on the importance of local boards and Municipalities as the basis of all Local Self-Government.

Lord Minto, in reply said he welcomed the deputation as fully representing the enlightened Moslem community of India, which based its opinions on a matured consideration of existing political conditions. He sketched the efforts of the British Government in the past to foster education among the Mahommedans, in order to fit them for a share in the administration. His Excellency then referred to their efforts, which had culminated in Aligarh College. He quoted Sir Syed Ahmed's address to Lord Lytton in 1877 and said his inspiration and the teachings at Aligarh were reflected in the loyalty, common sense, and sound reasoning expressed in the address. He recognised the feelings which recent events had provoked among the younger generation, and thanked the Mahommedan community of the new province of Eastern Bengal for the moderation and self-restraint which they had shown. At the same time, he sympathised with all that was sincere in Bengali sentiment. The Mahommedan community of Eastern Bengal, whose future he considered assured, could firmly rely on British justice and fair play. His Excellency continued :

You have addressed me, gentlemen, at a time when the political atmosphere is full of change. We all feel that it would be foolish to attempt to deny its existence. Hopes and ambitions new to India are making themselves felt. We cannot ignore them. I should be wrong were I to wish you to do so; but to what is all this unrest due ? Not to the discontent of misgoverned millions I defy anyone honestly to assert that. Nor is it due to any uprising of disaffected people. It is due to that educational growth in which only a very small portion of the population has yet shared of which British rule first sowed the seed and the fruits of which British rule is now doing its best to foster and direct. There may be many tares in the harvest we are now reaping. The Western grain which we have sown may not be entirely suitable to the requirements of the people of India. But the educational harvest will increase as years go on, and the healthiness of nourishment it gives, will depend on the careful administration and distribution of its products.

Lord Minto, continuing, said he would be far from welcoming all the political machinery of the Western world among the hereditary instincts and traditions of Eastern races, and that though British ideas must prevail, they must not carry with them an impracticable insistence on the acceptance of political methods. He promised to bring the points they had raised before a committee of the council.

The pith of your address (his Excellency proceeded), as I understand is the claim that in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a legislative council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies, as now constituted, cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that if by chance they did so, it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidates's views to those of the majority opposed to his own community whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated, not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me, I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced, as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be mischievous and doomed to failure which aimed at granting personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representative institutions, and I agree with you that the initial rungs in the ladder of Self-Government are to be found in municipal district boards; and in that direct we must look for the gradual political education of the people. In the meantime, I can only say that Mahommedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded in any administrative

organisation with which I am concerned, and that you and the people of India may rely upon the British Raj to respect as it has been its pride to do, the religious beliefs and national traditions of the myriads composing the population of his Majesty's Indian Empire.

***Source*: The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.**

24

WESTERN PRESS ON SIMLA DEPUTATION

Lord Beaconsfield or rather Mr. Disraeli, for it was in his House of Commons stage that the incident happened—once started the country by declaring that England was the greatest Mahommedan power in the world. It is not often that we are thus face to face with one of the problems with the British rulers of India have to solve, but we are again reminded of that problem by the deputation representing sixty-two millions of Mahommedans which waited on Lord Minto yesterday. The ostensible object to the deputation which included the recognised leaders of the great Mahommedan families, was to ask that if there is going to be any extended system of Self-Government in India, care should be taken that the just claims of the Mahommedan population should be protected, and there was hinted a profound disbelief in the value of representative institutions. But there is more to be read between the lines. The Mahommedans of India have become alarmed and resentful because of the political agitation and clamour on the part of the Hindus. The latter exceed the Mahommedans in number, and their picked youths, with minds that develop early, possess exceptional powers of memory. They are wonderfully quick in preparing for examinations, although they usually shine more in those subjects in which memory is most requisite and less in those other subjects which demand original thought. But a large number of them have profited by the educational advantages provided by English rule and a considerable number come to the English Universities and are called to the Bar, and exhibit at the best some admirable qualities, and at the worst the kind of superficiality and veneer which Mr. Anstey has so cleverly caricatured. They are glib speakers and facile writers, and it is not surprising, perhaps, that they should be anxious to tell the world how India should be ruled. They dose periodically at the Indian National Congress, and English ignorance of India is so great that there are still a large number of Englishmen who attribute to that interesting, and in its way useful, gathering an importance it does not possess. After all, education is enjoyed only by a very small part of the

population of India as a whole, and the vast majority of the Hindus have never heard that there is an Indian National Congress. The Bengali lawyers and students, orators and journalists, who criticise the Anglo-Indian Government as if there were any practical alternatives, do not represent even people of their own race and religion, but they most seriously misrepresent the people of India who do not belong to their race and religion. And the deputation to Lord Minto was composed of men of the strong, warlike, virile, conquering races of India who, to speak plainly, have utmost contempt for those whom they consider to be their inferior, who talk at National Congresses and are taken so seriously by a section of the English people. The recent agitation in Bengal, even without its final absurdity of the 'coronation' of Mr. Bannerjee, has angered the Mahommedans and the deputation yesterday was a hint that the British Government had better not pay too much heed to the clamour of the sort of men who by their glibness and self-assertion are, apparently beginning to think they constitute a nation. It was a sign of alarm and it was a warning also. The great Mahommedan races—people who admire strength and possibly over value it—have been won to loyalty to the British Government by the strength and capacity of our soldiers and our great administrators. But they despise and hate the Hindus, and they do not want to see these people—an inferior people, in their eyes, lacking in physical and military strength given the political power for which they clomaur.

There is no such thing, there can be no such thing, as the Indian nation. It would be as sensible to speak of the European nation. There are more than a hundred nationalities in India, and nothing is more clear than that if it were not for the protecting power of the British Government and the presence of the British soldiers, the garrulous and effusive Bengali Baboos, despite their University degrees and their really remarkable mental powers, would soon become once more the slaves, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, to the strong and warlike Mahommedan nationalities of the north. We may think, and from our Western standpoint we may be right, that intellect ought to be more highly regarded than brute-force, that the capacity to pass examinations is the only test of fitness to govern, and that every Indian should rejoice in the extension of political power to any other Indian. But the Mahommedans of India do not think thus. They belong to the conquering races, and the Hindus to the conquered. They love fighting and send men to our Army and to native State armies whilst the Hindu is a mild and gentleperson, the product of centuries of slavery, and even comically destitute of physical courage. It is not a caricature but a fact that a prominent Hindu 'reformer' advocated quite recently that when he and his friends rule India, the British troops should remain in order to prevent the Mahommedans from rebelling. And when the Mahommedan chiefs hint disbelief in the governing capacity of any Hindu who can pass examinations they are not always very far wrong. For this capacity needs moral qualities as well as academic distinction. We do not select our own rulers by academic examination, other-

wise Mr. John Burns would not be at the Local Government Board. But Mr. Burns would be a splendid administrator in India. Where as it is the melancholy fact that very often a Hindu student of great distinction in the schools, will be found asbolutely destitute of the fairness, moral courage, and high character which a man needs who has 'to indifferently administer justice' in a land where racial and religious differences call for these moral as well as intellectual attainments on the part of rulers. The Mahommedan will obey an Englishman, but he will not obey a Hindu, and when Hindus talk about Self-Government, and pretend that they speak for anyone but themselves, they deceive only those Englishmen who know nothing of Indian life. Lord Minto's reply was reassuring. It may be possible to enlist in the Government of India representatives of the the best and ablest of the Indian people, but India is obviously unsuited to the enforced application to it of the Western methods of Government which suit us. No greater danger could befall English rule, than for the Mahommedan nations to believe that we are listening too much to and accepting at their own valuation the fluent Hindus who have taken to prophesying their political ascendancy. It is an ascendancy which would not last a day if it had to depend on the unaided power of the Hindus to rule their former conquerors

Source : Western Press, vide The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.

25

ANGLIAN SERVICE ON SIMLA DEPUTATION

The address presented by the Mahommedan deputation to the Government of India is a frank expression of the ideas of a population numbering sixty-two millions which lives under the British rule. A good deal has been heard lately of a great and silent upheaval of the Mahommedan peoples of the East, but there is no reason to assign this address to any such alleged disturbing factors. Lord Minto, in answer to this petition, refuses to believe that it is due either to discontent or to disaffection, and he treats it merely as the expression of a desire to receive recognition in a Constitutional manner. Lord Minto does not appear to regard this petition as a symptom of the Mahommedan unrest that pervades the East generally, but he seems to regard it as the direct outcome of the progressive freedom and education which the Mahommedans have enjoyed under the British rule in India. Looked at in this light, there is nothing that need cause misgiving in the demands of the Mahommedan population, for they merely express a natural desire to enjoy their fair and reasonable share in the administration of the body politic of

the Indian Empire. This is only a natural outcome of the progressive evolution of our control of the destinies of India, and if the people ask to take larger share in this work. It is not for the British to stand in the way of their legitimate aspirations. It is true that the Mahommedan people do not by any means stand for the whole of India, but they do not ask to be considered alone but only to receive their share of consideration. What concrete form the willingness of the Indian Government to indulge these aspirations will take, has yet to be considered in Council, but the Mahommedan, will receive, as they are entitled, a sympathetic consideration for their wishes. There are underground causes at work in India just now which deserve the attention of serious statesmen, but there can be no danger in listening to the wishes of a large body of the population which approaches the Government in an open and Constitutional manner.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.

26

DUNDEE ADVERTISER ON ALL INDIA MAHOMMEDAN DEPUTATION

Politicians who with light hearts and lighter means would endow India with Western political mechinery just because a Babu assembly demands it one a hurricane of eloquence, should ponder deeply the significance, of the Mahommedan deputation which yesterday waited upon the Viceroy. There are over sixty million Moslems in India, enough to constitute by themselves a very great nation, yet they form but a small minority of the peoples who inhabit the peninsula. Hence the fears and forebodings which their representatives communicated to Lord Minto. To those Moslems it appears that if for the purpose of municipal or district Government the political machinery which suits Britain is applied to India, they will everywhere find themselves in a minority and, as they will feel it, subject to the Hindu hordes around them. For the Rulers of India it therefore becomes a question whether any such experimentation is possible. The rule of the majority is excellent in countries with homogenous populations; applied to a nation with another nation within it, it is no rule at all. Nor can it be said that popular statistics have their usual value in India, for though numerically the Moslems are inferior to the Brahmins they are of the more forceful and virile races which in their day have conquered and ruled. No scheme which outraged their pride would have a moment's hope of success. That the Government of India may be modified so that the people of India shall take their part in it,

every Liberal hopes and believes. But the machinery to suit the case is still to devise, and the work will be gone about hopefully only by a statesman capable of rising above prepossessions and theories which have arisen from another experience than that of East.

Source: The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.

27

DAILY EXPRESS ON MUSLIM DEPUTATION

The members of the Mahommedan deputation who presented an address to Lord Minto on behalf of their co-religionists in India may not have been aware that, in that act, they had offered to the British people one of the deepest problems which we have ever been called upon to solve in the consolidation of our Empire. So far as the white States of Empire are concerned, the question of representative government is one which is easily settled by recognising the full right of our colonial fellow-subjects to the political power which we enjoy. But when we come to consider the same question in regard to India, it at once takes on another and some what anxious aspect. The time was bound to come when the native of India would aspire to an increased and definite share in the Government of the country. We, by our own civilising efforts, have hastened, the day. In what spirit is their application to be met, and towards what goal are we to direct it ?

Already we have conceded to the natives a certain share in municipal government. It has not worked quite successfully, yet it is obvious that we can neither cancel it nor let it remain stationary. We must, in short, offer a larger field for the aspirations which we ourselves have brought into being. The form which these enlarged privileges will take must necessarily depend upon the peculiar conditions of the Indian world. In a country which is not racially homogeneous, it would be the merest pedantry to establish Local Self-Government on the British model. The real divisions of India are not administrative, nor even geographical. They are religious divisions, and the truest system of representation must recognise them as such. In other words the Mahommedan must be represented as a Mahommedan, the Hindu as a Hindu. This is the principle with which Lord Minto concurred in his speech to the Mahommedan deputation, and, so far as can be judged, it is not only the safest and the wisest, but also the most just from the native standpoint.

Source: The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.

28

SHEFIELD INDEPENDENT ON SIMLA DEPUTATION

Although Most British people are conscious of a certain responsibility in regard to India, the consciousness is normally in a rather sleepy condition. It is not true to say that as a nation we disregard India, but it certainly requires some occurrence of more or less sensational character to turn our attention there. Something has happened there which is not at all sensational, but which is exceedingly significant and not to be ignored by anyone in this country who takes a real concern—as all of us ought to do—in India's interests. A Mahommedan deputation has visited the Governor-General, Lord Minto, with a view of making representations to him of a political or semi-political character. The deputation spoke for the whole body of Mahommedans in India, and that body numbers 53 millions. This is only a comparatively small fraction of India's huge population; but since the Mahommedans, generally speaking, are good citizens, good business men, good fighters, and law-abiding and loyal to the Crown, they are assuredly not an element to be ignored. Hitherto they have taken no part in political agitation; it is contrary to the Mahommedan character to do so. But the noisy demands of the Bengalis have awakened anxiety in Mahommedan minds lest the Hindus should receive political privilege that would be denied to the Mahommedans. This was the motive that promoted Monday's deputation to Lord Minto. That statesman was able to give them a reassuring answer; and we may surely feel confident that in any political favours that are extended in future to the people of India the authorities will not forget that the quiet request of the Mahommedans is in agreeable contrast with the violent methods of agitation employed by the Bengalis, who seem in some cases to have carried their irritation over the partition of Bengal to most unwarrantable lengths. We must do justice to all races in India alike; but we must avoid any appearance of being intimidated, and the claims of unobtrusive loyalty must on no account be overlooked on account of the clamour of the people who are more obtrusive and, one fears, less loyal.

Source : The Aligarh Institute Gazette, November 1906.

29

THE BENGALEE ON THE MAHOMMEDAN DEPUTATION

We desire to congratulate the Mahommedan community on the public spirit which led to the organization of this deputation. There is no mistake

but that the spread of education is producing its natural results and that it is attended with that political ferment which is its inseparable concomitant... . The Mahommedan deputation is a notable fact in the political evolution of the Mahommedan community in India and may be regarded as the first fruit of that educational movement which is destined, in the near future, to produce great results. Speaking for our Hindu fellow-countrymen, we may say that we are in cordial sympathy with the first signs of Mahommedan awakening; for the progress of India means the joint and combined progress of Hindus and Mahommedans alike.

Source **: The Bengalee, 4 October 1906.**

30

THE TRIBUNE ON THE MAHOMMEDAN ADDRESS

In another column we publish in extenso the text of the address presented to Lord Minto on Monday morning by the all-India Deputation of Mahommedan gentlemen that waited on His Excellency. The reply given by His Excellency the Viceroy was published in our issue of Yesterday. The address sets forth clearly and in sufficient detail what educated Mussulmans all over the country want the Government of India to do in behalf of their community. As a statement of Mahommedan aspiration it is more than exhaustive. As a plea for special treatment it is neither graceful nor effective. The references to the Congress through veiled and indirect are not at all in good taste, and the attempt at minimising the importance of all non-Islamic communities—more particularly the Hindus—is scarcely praiseworthy or creditable. In places the address reads like a free paraphrase of the articles that have recently appeared in the *Pioneer* and some other Anglo-Indian papers proposing that Mahommedan should be taken under the special protection of Government and thereby prevented from joining the political agitations of the Hindus. It is very much to be regretted that our Mahommedan fellow-countrymen have succumbed to the temptation to play to the Anglo-Indian officials as well as publicists. If the premises from which they have deducted some of their quite untenable conclusions were accepted the people of India would be entitled to but a small share in the administration of their own affairs. The reference to the unsuitability of representative institutions to this country does not reflect any credit on either the prudence or foresight of those who drew up the address. In fact it goes a long way to encourage the impression current all over educated India that the address is an astute move on the part of certain Anglo-Indians to induce Mr. John Morley to desist from making

any political concessions to the people of India and we have again to observe with regret that our Mahommedan fellow-countrymen have unwittingly allowed themselves, to a large extent, to be converted into an instrument to thwart the political aspirations of educated Indians.

We shall try to expose a few of the fallacies and erroneous statements, contained in the address. According to the latest census the Mahommedan population of this country does not in all exceed 62 millions, or between one-fifth and one-fourth of the total population of India. A statement to this effect is made in the address, but, at the same time, an attempt is made to minimise the numerical strength of the Hindus. It is stated that 'if reduction be made for the uncivilised portions of the community enumerated under the head of animists and other minor religions as well as for those classes who are ordinarily classified as Hindus but properly speaking are not Hindus at all, the proportion of Mahommedans to the Hindu majority becomes much larger.' There is not a word, however, in the address to show that among the 62 millions of Mahommedans more than 80 per cent are converts from the lowest castes of Hindus. In the total population of this country there are large sections which practically do no count when the question of a share in the administration is under consideration, and the Mahommedans predominate therein. The statement that 'the position accorded to the Mahommedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect and in all other ways affecting their status and influence should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance and the value to which their policy has given rise,' rendered into plain English means that 'as the Mahommedans have refrained from joining the Congress, every special favour should be shown to them at the expense of the Hindus.' The statement that no Mahommedan has the chance of election to either the Provincial or the Supreme Legislative Council under the present arrangements is not correct. A Mahommedan gentleman has been elected on three occasions to represent the Madras Presidency in the Viceregal Council and in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh the electors offered to return the late Mr. Justice Mahmud on two occasions. In Bengal and Bombay Mahommedan gentlemen have been elected as representatives of groups of District and Municipal Boards. The soundness of the principle that none but thoroughly competent men should be elected to represent the people in the Legislative Councils irrespective of all considerations relating to caste or creed cannot be questioned for a moment, and it is surely a curious assertion that fitness should be regarded as only a subsidiary factor in the problem. The references to the relative positions of Mahommedans and Hindus in the Punjab and the United Provinces are inaccurate. In these Provinces the Mahommedans certainly possess more than their fair share of everything that it is in the power of the State to bestow. For several years past the local governments in Upper India have extended their special patronage to Mahommedans and provided them with appointment in all

branches of the public service, independent of all considerations of educational capacity and intellectual equipment. The prayer that 'Government will be graciously pleased to provide that both in the gazetted and the subordinate and ministerial services of all Indian Provinces a due proportion of Mahommedans shall always find place' is in no way open to objection; but a good deal depends on the construction put on the word 'due'. It is contended in the address and we think without any good ground, that the orders issued by the Government pro-Mahommedan officials of Government these orders have been made the pretext for depriving a large number of Hindus of their dues. The statement that 'a tendency is unfortunately perceptible to reject them (Mahommedans) on the ground of relatively superior qualifications having to be given precedence is erroneous The tendency, on the other hand, is to reject or pass over better qualified candidates because they are not Mahommedans. The references to the political significance of the monopoly of all official influence by one class are equally out of place. We do not deny that 'character is of greater importance than mere mental aditness' in the making of a good public servant, but it is nothing short of impertinence to claim that it is the exclusive possession of the Mahommedans. The references to the contribution made by Mahommedans to the military strength of the Empire are inquestionable as Sikhs, Gurkhas, Dogras, Rajputs, Jats, Maharattas and the Madrasis constitute quite a large part of His Majesty's army in India.

The statement regarding the position of superiority occupied by the Mahommedans before the advent of British rule is sufficient to try any one's patience. The Sikhs ruled the Punjab before it was annexed to British India, and the British, took over the reins of power from the Maharattas. No where in India did British rule replace the Mahommedan. The effeminate descendant of the Moghul Emperors was certainly the normal ruler of Hindustan, but his power and authority were largely circumscribed. If the British had not come on the scene the revival of the Hindus sovereignty of India would have been a question only of time. Equally unfortunate is that part of the address in which an attempt is made to teach the British ruler of India how to introduce representative institutions into the Government of India, if their introduction is at all desirable. The complaint that at the present moment there are no Mahommedan Judges in any of the highest Judicial tribunals of the country is literally correct, but the framers of the address ought to have known that Government has always appointed Mahommedans as Judges when competent men have been available. The references to the numbers of Hindus serving at present as Judges in the various parts of India are in very bad taste indeed. The advice regarding the constitution of the Senates and the Syndicates of the various Universities, the District and Municipal Boards and regarding the representation on Legislative Councils shows clearly that the framers of the address have given no thought as to whether workable constitutions could be secured if the suggestions made in the address are

adopted in their entirety.

The reply given by Lord Minto we intend to notice in detail in a later issue. It is sufficient to say here that it was couched in courteous and sympathetic terms. The references to Eastern Bengal and Assam and the new spirit abroad are noticeable. Educated Indians will be grateful to His Lordship for his emphatic repudiation of the allegations relating to the discontent of misgoverned millions and the uprising of a disaffected people.

Source : The Tribune, 3 October 1906.

31

LETTER FROM SPECTATOR TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING MAHOMMEDAN AND AGITATION

Reuter, wiring a short time ago the summary of an article in the London *Times,* said : 'If the Indian Government does not retain the confidence of loyal Mahommedans, they may expect to see Mahommedans join the Congress or set up an agitation of their own.' That the Government should and will do and has done all it can to retain the confidence of loyal Mahommedans as of loyal Hindus and of all the loyal communities inhabiting this vast continent goes without saying. But I submit I do not see any harm if the Mahommedans set up an agitation of their own or joined the Congress in case they deemed it necessary to do either the one or the other. That, for obvious reasons, they will not join the Congress is another matter. But if they ever thought of adopting that course, their robust commonsense would, to a certainty, lead them to insist before hand on the Congress being purged of its extremist element. The Congress would then be a harmless factor in the politics of the country. If the Mahommedans started an independent agitation of their own, they would conduct it on strictly constitutional lines from which their natural prudence would never allow them to depart even an inch. Every Government would welcome such agitation. If agitation has latterly come to connote something undesirable, the fault lies entirely with the extremists who have sprung up more or less in every part of India, and it is probably this abuse of it, which the *Times* is thinking of. But, there is not the least chance of the Mahommedans ever lapsing into it. They have got such wholesome horror of agitation that they object to that word being applied to what they are now doing to safeguard their special interests. But what is there in a name. They may call it their appeal or anything they like. In substance it is a case of 'Ask and it shall be given', which is not far removed from what may be called chaste agitation.

Source : The Pioneer, 24 October 1906.

32

LETTER FROM 'A HINDU' TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING SIMLA DEPUTATION

The deputation has come and gone, but its chilling effect on the Hindus is still perceptible. The fact is that the Mahommedan address itself, the Viceroy's reply thereto, and the most encouraging comments of most of the Anglo-Indian papers thereon, all these combined have produced a very disquieting effect on the Hindu mind.

A few Bengali Hindus have undoubtedly provoked the anger of the ruling race by their boycott of the British goods as well as by their fierce and insensible agitation against partition. But there are many highly educated and cultured Hindus in Bengal itself who have been dissuading the people from following such a course. Leaving Bengal, we have seen the leading Hindus in other parts of India condemning the manner and method of this agitation. It would, therefore, be an irony of fate if the whole Hindu race, numbering over 200 millions of the loyal subjects of the King-Emperor, were to suffer for the faults of a few of their co-religionists in Bengal. The Hindus from their hearts are the firm supporters and well-wishers of the British Government in India. Britain may be the greatest Mahommedan power, but it is the only Hindu power in the world. This fact should never be lost sight of. It is altogether wrong to think that the Hindus are against the British Raj. The very idea is preposterous. No sensible man would entertain it for a moment. Those who lend support to such a mischievous idea do so from some ulterior motives of their own. Such a charge against them is entirely false, for Hindus know it perfectly well that if the British were to leave India, they would be the greatest sufferers. As yet they have not forgotten the hardships they suffered in the days of the Mahommedan rule. The case of Indian Muslims is quite different, for in such an eventuality they can look to Mahommedan Powers for help and protection. Do not they openly declare the Sultan of Turkey as their head ? But whom can the Hindus, who form more than half the population of the whole British Empire, look up to ? The law of self-interest and self-preservation requires that Hindus should always wish well to a Government which has conferred on them all the blessings of a peaceful rule, and on the stability of which depends their safety, nay, their very existence as a nation. The followers of the Prophet among other qualifications desire the professing of their faith to be recognised as a qualification for Government posts and for seats in the Legislative Councils, Senates and Syndicates, Local and Municipal Boards.

To grant such an unreasonable and audacious demand would impose disabilities on the Hindus. To favour Muslims against the Hindus would simply be taking us back to the days of Aurangzeb. It would be nothing

short of inducing the weaker amongst us to become Mahommedans to secure Government patronage.

The Hindus are for a fair field, and I am sure every right-minded person would be of the same opinion. However, if the Muslims consider themselves incapable of competing with the Hindus in open competition, and are willing to base their claims upon numerical proportions, Hindus can have no objection to it. According to the criterion taking the case of India as a whole, every post that goes to a Mahommedan four should go to the Hindus. Similarly the question of representation in Legislative Councils, Senates and Syndicates, Municipal and District Boards be decided, *i. e.* for every Muslim member there should be four Hindu members. Besides these two communities there are Indian Christians, Sikhs and Parsees. The individual existence of each and every one of these communities cannot be ignored by any one. Every fair-minded person would admit that they must also have their proper share in Government service as well as in Legislative Councils and Local bodies etc.

Source : The Pioneer, 25 October 1906.

33

LETTER FROM THE AGA KHAN TO DUNLOP SMITH
29 October 1906

In order to reach the definite objects mentioned by the Deputation.... I have asked all the members... to form in a permanent committee, and I have given to my old friend Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who as you know is a most loyal and zealous Mahommedan, certain instructions regarding the methods by which he is to proceed....

I have also asked him not to move in any matter before first finding out if the step to be taken has the full approval of Government privately, as otherwise, unintentionally, he might be led to do something or other that would leave the Government in an inconvenient situation.

Source : Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India.*

34

THE PIONEER ON MAHOMMEDANS AND POLITICS

The question as to whether or not Mahommedans who are in the service of Government can join or take part in political meetings or demonstrations has often been raised and discussed without eliciting any satisfactory or authoritative pronouncement on the subject. Quite recently again queries have been addressed to the *Pioneer* on the part, and we think it is high time that the question be discussed and decided once for all. The necessity of raising the question at the present moment when an awakening—and a political awakening too—is taking place in the Mahommedan world of India, cannot be over-rated.... As true Moslems they (government servants) felt it was their duty to rise to a man, in upholding a measure which was calculated to do so much good to their community, but as Government servants they were afraid to commit themselves to put themselves in a criticisable position.

Home Department Circular No. 11 Public, 679–88, dated 18th March, 1890 (vide the Government Servents' (Conduct Rules), says : 'A Government servant may not take part in any political agitation or meeting, or attend any political meeting, his presence at which is likely to be misconstrued or to impair his public usefulness.' There is nothing in this rule to show that Government servants are to keep themselves entirely aloof from political demonstrations. As long as they do not participate in political movements directed against the administration they have nothing to fear. Besides no reasonable objection can be raised against a Government servant joining in political meetings or demonstrations of the right sort. This may at times considerably strengthen the hands of Government. The Mahommedan community is a backward and a small community, and of the few educated and enlightened men it produces every year, the major portion is attracted to Government service. It would indeed be cruel and undiplomatic to prevent them from participating in such political movements as only concern their own community and at the same time go not against the British Government. It cannot be gainsaid that as enlightened and advanced men it is the responsible duty of each and every member of this small band to safeguard the interests of their own community.... The Mahommedan Literary Society of Calcutta and the Central National Mahommedan Asso-public bodies, which are composed at least partially of Government servants, enjoy the confidence of Government and are frequently consulted by the authorities on questions of Mahommedan interest. These facts go to prove that Government is not opposed to its servants participating in healthy politics. Why then Government servants are afraid to join to political movements which are calculated to do an amount of good to their community without going against the British administration.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 November 1906.

35

AMEER ALI ON SIMLA DEPUTATION

Since the notable Resolution issued twenty one years ago by Lord Dufferin on the memorial of the Central National Mahommedan Association no more important declaration of policy has emanated from the head of the Indian Government than the reply of the Viceroy to the Mahommedan Deputation that waited on him at Simla on the 1st of October. For although Lord Minto spoke with a certain reserve, which was only natural under the circumstances, there can hardly be any question (that) his words indicate the general attitude of his Government towards the Mussulmans of India. Apart from its importance as a political pronouncement, it shows a clear appreciation of the existing situation and the growing difficulties of British administration, helped by its own extraordinary tendency to lean more or less exclusively on one element in the work of government. It shows, further, that the State begins to realise its responsibility towards the Mussulman people and the unwisdom of overlooking their interests in the multiplicity of claims pressed upon its attention with unvarying persistency by more articulate sections of the Indian nationalities. Hitherto, according to general Mahommedan opinion, the eyes of Government—with a short interlude—have been fixed on one class. Lord Minto's tactful and sympathetic reply bids them hope for a change.

The resolve of the Mahommedans, after a lapse of twenty three years, again to approach the Viceroy personally points to a consciousness of the danger that lies before them, if they remain dormant and devoid of political life and activity much longer, of becoming entirely submerged under the rising tide of an exclusive nationalism.

The Deputation is the first concerted action on their part, conceived in a constitutional spirit without implying offence to any other people, to assert their rights to equitable treatment as subjects of a common sovereign—a treatment which certainly from their point of view has so far not been extended to them.

Not that the necessity for such united action did not present itself to them before; for, as early as 1882, it was perceived by the more thoughtful that the course events were taking rendered some collective efforts to safeguard their interests absolutely essential. The increasing preponderance of the majority in all departments of the State, the indifference, not to say intolerance, of the official classes towards Mussulman needs and wishes, their own disintegration in some parts and political inaction everywhere had almost completely driven them into the background. Although in Upper India the conflict of special interests had not assumed an overt shape, the subsequent controversy about the Urdu language and character, decided by Sir Antony

Macdonell against the Mahommedans, showed that even there the balance required adjustment.

To obtain some amelioration of the situation, a scheme was set on foot for holding in Calcutta and other principal cities of India annual conferences of representative delegates to discuss questions affecting the material and educational development of the Mussulman community under the auspices of the British crown, to advise Government as occasion arose with regard to their needs and requirements, and to give it every assistance in the promotion of the general well-being. Such conferences were not meant to be in any sense exclusive or antagonistic to any other community, but were rather to work in conjunction with other organisations in the advancement of national welfare. The scheme came to naught, owing to the opposition of some leading Mahommedans, whose eyes were fixed in a different direction. Two years later came the 'National Congress', which, by a vigorous propaganda and the free use of the methods commonly called 'political agitation', has acquired a remarkable, although perhaps unacknowledged; ascendancy in the counsels of Government. In this it has been greatly assisted by outside help, which has always been denied to the Mahommedans. This denial of sympathy and support to the Mussulmans is due, perhaps, as much to a bias against their religion as to the general lack of the talent to ingratiate themselves with people of influence, whether officials or travelling philanthropists.

Besides the Bharata Dharma Mandal, which ostentiously proclaim for its object the regeneration of India on strictly orthodox lines, the 'National Congress' is the most active organisation for giving expression to the vast aims and aspirations of the majority. Its sphere of activity is widening in every direction; it keeps at arm's length uncongenial elements, and suppresses dissent within and unfriendly criticism outside by boycott and denunciations. The goal of the 'Moderates' and 'Extremists', into which it has been divided by recent political writers, is the same; only the method of reaching it is different.

These remarks are conceived in no unfriendly spirit, for I admire the ability and consistency of purpose which have enabled its leaders to attain its present success and solidarity.

A few Mahommedans have thrown in their lot with the Congress; and, although they have exposed themselves to some ridicule, their motives are intelligible and not unreasonable. They believe a few scraps to be better than none, and think that under an avowed regime of the majority they would have a far better chance than now of sharing in the proverbial 'loaves and fishes'. But so far the bulk throughout the country has held aloof. They have pinned their faith on the permanence of British rule in India as the only means under present conditions of her continuous development,—as the only means to prevent anarchy within or invasion from outside.

Their attitude has been influenced not so much by the exhortations or advice of any particular individual as by the general consciousness that with-

out any positive safeguarding guarantee—which, in view of the exclusive spirit that had sprung up in many quarters, *malgre* the protestations at the top, it was impossible to obtain—the interests of the minority were sure to go under. They felt that their interests were certain to be relegated to the background, to be treated as of no consequence compared to those of the majority. And this is the view which the Mussulman memorial reflects.

In a State organism principally consisting of two distinct elements, one strong by its number and the general intelligence, ability, and political consciousness of its educated sections, the other virile, animated by those traditions of power and learning which impart backbone to a nation, equally intelligent but lacking the ready aptitude of adaptation and backward in the spirit of organisation and 'pushfulness,' the Government has chosen to leave the less practically active element neglected and depressed. Whether this policy has brought it any strength or earned the gratitude of either party the future historian of India will be able to answer.

By an irony of fate the necessity for a constitutional movement on the part of the Mahommedans to obtain in some measure a restoration of the balance seems at this juncture to be appreciated most at Aligarh. It has taken a quarter of a century to enforce the lesson that, even under fairly progressive Governments, in the struggle for existence and race for progress, no nationality can allow itself to be lulled into sleep without facing the defeat which overtook the hare in the old-world fable.

Barely two months ago I noted in this Review[1] the peculiarly difficult position occupied by the Mussulman subjects of his Majesty :

'Whilst the non-official Anglo-Indian and the Hindu communities possess powerful institutions for safeguarding their rights and privileges and asserting their claims to consideration and fairplay, the Indian Mussulmans are suffering acutely from political inanition. Material decadence and general want of touch with modern thought have brought about a deplorable state of disintegration. The associations that exist in different parts of the country possess no solidarity and display no conception of the essential requirements of the community. There is no concerted action to prevent further decline of their people, to promote their advancement, to place before Government their considered views on public matters, or to obtain relief from the mischiefs arising from the misunderstanding of their laws and customs.

'To find one nationality not pressing its claims to an equal recognition of its rights is undoubtedly an advantage; it saves embarrassment. Thus, generally speaking, the Mussulman, whilst he is patted on the back for holding aloof from what is called 'political agitation', and told to apply himself like a good boy to his books; when it comes to practical treatment is relegated to the cold shade of neglect. Official statistics show that in Upper India the proportion of Mahommedans receiving education is greater than that of their Hindu fellow-subjects. In the other provinces they have admittedly made great progress.

[1] 'India and the New Parliament', August 1906.

And yet in the matter of public employment or official recognition they are as unfavourably situated as ever. The reason is simple. They have no political influence and cannot make their voice properly heard in the council-chamber or office room.'

And I ventured to add :

It must not be supposed that the Mussulmans are devoid of the political instinct or oblivious of the value of collective action. They note as keenly as any other people the signs of the times; and in this lies the seriousness of the situation. In the absence of a recognised organisation capable of expressing freely and openly the sentiments and opinions of the Mahommedans as a body, the feelings of the masses are likely to take a wrong shape and find outlet through unregulated channels.

In studiously moderate language the memorialists have sounded a similar note of warning :

'The Mussulmans of India (they say) have hitherto placed implicit reliance on the sense of justice and love of fair dealing that has always characterised their rulers, and have in consequence abstained from pressing their claims by methods the might prove at all embarrassing; but, earnestly as we desire that the Mussulmans of India should not in the future depart from that excellent and time honoured tradition, recent events have stirred up feelings, especially among the younger generation of Mahommedans, which might, in certain circumstances and under certain contingencies, easily pass beyond the control of temperate counsel and sober guidance.'

In spite of the bogey of Pan-Islamism, conjured up by fevered brains, which is responsible for much wild talk in the public press of England and France, the perspective of Anglo-Indians, officials and non-officials, as regards Mahommedans, has considerably altered within recent years. They are regarded now as one of the most loyal nationalities of India : in fact, their loyalty has come to be recognised as one of the 'bulwarks' of the British Empire. It is felt that to neglect and longer a people which, by its self-control under the most trying circumstances, has shown itself worthy of help and support, would be equally unjust and impolitic.

At this moment a commission, appointed by the Viceroy at the invitation of His Majesty's Secretary of State, is deliberating over certain proposals to afford a larger scope for the employment of qualified Indians in the higher departments of State service, to further enlarge that Legislative Councils, and to extend the principle of election. All these subjects are admittedly of the utmost importance to the Indian Mussulmans. To have missed the opportunity of representing the Mahommedan side of the question would have been fatal. For no thoughtful Indian, whatever his politics, can believe that the progress of India can be promoted by depressing or keeping in the background one nationality in favour of another.

The memorial presented by the Deputation, although it omits to notice one or two points, expresses in moderate and dignified language the views and

feelings of the Mahommedans people with respect to the questions before the commission. Neither their moderation nor their self-restraint will spare the memorialists from the sectional indignation to which all attempts to seek justice for another body are exposed. But the prayers are so well founded and legitimate that they cannot fail to command the approval and sympathy of every class interested in the welfare of India.

The memorial presents for the consideration of Government two questions, viz. : (1) the employment of the Mahommedans in the service of the State; and (2) their representation on the Provincial and Viceregal Councils, on the Municipal and Local Boards, and on the Senates and Syndicates of the Indian Universities. With regard to the first they say :

'We beg to observe that the political importance of a community to a considerable extent gains strength or suffers detriment according to the position the members of that community occupy in the service of the State. If, as it is unfortunately the case with the Mahommedans, they are not adequately represented in this manner, they lose in the prestige and influence which are justly their due. We therefore pray that Government will be graciously pleased to provide that, both in the gazetted and the subordinate and ministerial services of all Indian provinces, a due proportion of Mahommedans should always find place. Orders of like import have, at times, been issued by local governments in some provinces, but have, unfortunately, not in all cases been strictly enforced, on the ground that qualified Mahommedans were not forthcoming. This allegation, however true it may have been at one time, is no longer tenable now; and whereever the will to employ them is not wanting the supply of qualified Mahommedans, we are happy to be able to assure your Excellency, is greater than any possible demand. Since, however, the number of qualified Mahommedans has increased a tendency is unfortunately perceptible to reject them on the ground of relatively superior qualifications having to be given precedence. This introduces something like the competitive element in its worst form, and we may be permitted to draw Your Excellency's attention to the political significance of the monopoly of all official influence by one class. We may also point out in this connection that the efforts of Mahommedan educationists have from the very outset of the education movement among them been strenuously directed towards the development of character, and this, we venture to think, is of greater importance than mere mental alertness in the making of a good public servant.'

To understand the exact import of this prayer it would be necessary to glance for a moment at the actual position of the Mahommedan element in the various branches of the public service.

Up to the time of Lord William Bentinck, the philanthrophic Governor-General who desired to pull down the Taj at Agra, the balance between the two great nationalities was fairly even. Perhpas it inclined somewhat in favour of the Mahommedans. The East India Company had obtained from a Mahommedan emperor the functions of collecting the revenue of Bengal,

Bihar and Orissa; and, although many changes had been introduced since then in the administration affecting the position of the Mussulmans, the tradition was still maintained that, in view of the compact of 1765, they were entitled to more liberal consideration than any other community. From 1826 the attitude of Government underwent a change. The result was a gradual depletion of the Mussulman element in all branches of the public service open to Indians. In 1871 the proportion of Mahommedans to their Hindu compatriots in what is called the gazetted appointments was less than one-seventh; in 1882 it had fallen below one-tenth.

As regards the lower grades the distribution of State patronage bore an extraordinary character. A few figures taken at random will illustrate this observation. In the Foreign Office staff, consisting of 54 officers, only one was a Mahommedan. The same was the case in the Home Department Staff, composed of 63 officers. In the Departments of Finance and Revenue, formed of 75 officers, in the Comptroller-General's Office, with a staff of 63 officers, in the office of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal (General and Revenue Department), with a staff of 90 officers of a superior grade, in the Judicial, Political, and Appointment Departments, composed of 82 officers, in the office of the Accountant-General of Bengal, with 181 officers, not a single Mahommedan enjoyed office. In the Board of Revenue, with 113 assistants, only one was a Mahommedan. Similarly in the office of the Inspector-General of Registration in Bengal there was only one. In the Customs Department, with a staff of 130 principal officers and assistants, and the Mahommedans were conspicuous by their absence from the muster roll. In the Preventive Department, in the Calcutta Collectorate, in the office of the Director-General of Post-Offices in India there was not a single Mahommedan. In the Postal Department, out of 2,035 officers, only 110 were Mahommedans. In the Telegraph and Public Work Departments none. Out of 421 Officers in the Department of Public Instruction only 38 were Mahommedans. In the High Court of Calcutta, out of 298 officers, only 47; and in the Calcutta Court of Small Causes, out of 27 ministerial officers only one was a Mahommedan.

In the Eastern districts of Bengal—viz. Fureedpore, Pubna, Mymensingh, Rajshahye, Chittagong, Midnapore, Rangpore, etc., the Mussulman population is considerably larger than the Hindu, in some places forming two-thirds at least of the population. In the Fureedpore district in 1882 out of a total of 366 Government employees only 30 were Mahommedans. In Mymensingh, out of 344, only 20 were Mussulmans. In Midnapore, out of 499 only 39, in Pubna, out of 205 only 26, in Rajshahye, out of 338 only 57; and in Barisal, out of 423 not more than 36 belonged to the Mussulman community

Since then English education has advanced by leaps and bounds among the Indian Mahommedans; it would be interesting and edifying to know how, after twenty-one year's working of Lord Dufferin's Resolution, the proportion stands to-day. The official list, which gives the names only of office holders in the superior grades, is instructive. In the Provincial service to

which oppointments are invariably made in India, out of 42 subordinate judges in Bengal, only one, so far as I can see, is a Mahommedan.[1] Out of 75 deputy magistrates in the first four grades, 13 are Mahommedans. In Eastern Bengal among the 10 subordinate judges, not one is a Mahommedan; out of 19 deputy magistrates in the second, third, and fourth grades, only one is a Mussulman. In the first grade there is not one.

In 1882, out of 261 munsiffs, who rank below the subordinate judges, 14 were Mahommedans. It may well be asked, 'Has there been any improvement since then ?'

In the other presidencies the condition is no better.

In the Bombay Presidency out of 18 subordinate judges of the first class only one is a Mahommedan, and that in Sindh, which is largely a Mahommedan province. Similarly one lucky follower of Islam finds a place among 22 deputy collectors in the first four grades. In the Madras Judicial Service, out of 165 appointments, 135 are held by Hindus, 26 by Europeans and Eurasians, and only 2 by Mahommedans. In the Executive Branch, out of 23 incumbents in the first three grades, a solitary Mussulman forms the exception. *The Moslem Patriot* of Madras states that in the 'Salt, Abkari, and Customs Department', where strength of character is more important than University qualifications, out of a total of 1,056 officers, 223 are Europeans, 790 Hindus and only 43 Mahommedans. Whilst a Mussulman correspondent in the *Times of India* of the 15th of September points out that out of 225 officers employed in the various judicial and executive capacities in the Bombay Presidency only eight are Mahommedans. In the Punjab Provincial Service, out of 44 officers in the first grades, only 12 are Mahommedans; whilst in the Upper Provinces, out of 44 subordinate judges, only 13 are Mahommedans, and in the Executive Branch of the Provincial Service in the first four grades, out of 51 officers 16 belong to the Mussulman faith.

Among the ministerial staff—the host of assistants and clerks—the disparity everywhere is till more disheartening. With these facts before us we can hardly wonder at the ranking sense of injustice which, it is useless to disguise, pervades the educated classes of Indian Mahommedans. Many of them have by dint of perseverance and industry acquired the education that has been held out to them as the passport to State employment. Like their more active and pushful compatriots, they entertain the legitimate ambition of sharing in State Patronage. Their sentiments naturally affect the feelings of the general body. It is to their credit that they have hitherto abstained from clamour, and so far maintained unshaken loyalty to the British Crown.

A consistent and statesmen like endeavour, which will not allow itself to be diverted from the pursuit of its object by adverse criticism, to redress the grievances of the classes from whom the public service is, or in the ordinary course would be recruited, the only remedy that can satisfy the Mahommedans and restore their confidence in British justice.

[1] In 1882 out of 56 officers, 3 were Mahommedans, 44 Hindus, and 9 Europeans.

This in substance is the prayer of the memorialists. It is neither extravagent nor unfair to any other community. They recognise it is only human nature that men should help relations, friends, and fellow-castemen, and try to hold the door against 'Aliens'. The desire for monopoly is not the characteristic of one continent. But they consider it to be the duty of the State to hold the balance regardless of sectional clamour, with even justice.[1]

As the first step towards the fulfilment of the promise held out to the Deputation, a complete and exhaustive return should be called for, showing the relative proportion of Mussulman employees, save, perhaps, in the menial grades. The return should be submitted periodically to the Government of India and the Home Government. This would enable the superior and controlling authorities to form an adequate idea of the situation, and to keep an eye on the process of amelioration. Heads of departments should be required to deal personally with the applications, and to see that all classes receive fair play. Vacancies, again, should be notified in the provincial gazettes and local publications, in Vernacular and English. Above all, I submit, the rules laid down in Lord Dufferin's Resolution should be strictly enforced.

The memorialists have laid great emphasis on the subject of Mahommedan representation in the Legislative Councils. The functions of these chambers have greatly altered within the last few years; the non-official members have obtained the right of interpellation, which enables them not only to indicate the trend of public opinion, but often to call attention to grievances the ventilation of which otherwise would be left to irresponsible journalists. It has also become the practice for government, at the conclusion of the Legislative Section, to detail, for the information of the Council, its financial and in some respects its general administrative policy, thus giving the members an opportunity for criticism and comment on the measures proposed. A further 'enlargement' of the Councils and extension of the principle of election, with possibly a widening of their functions, are on the tapis. Under these circumstances it is of vital importance to the Mahommedans to be properly represented in the Supreme and Provincial Councils.

[1] The allegation of the Mahommedans that the unpopularity of the late Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal was in great measure due to his proclaimed desire to do them justice does not seem to be unwarranted. The avowed organ of the 'National Congress' in London in commenting on the well-known Lyon Circular, in which certain rules were laid down for the admission of Mahommedans to public offices, had the remarkable heading for its paragraph 'Religious Test not Merit' : and now an agitation is said to be on foot to get the Circular rescinded. This, I am afraid, is not the spirit which would win the sympathy of the Mussulmans in Congress enterprises ; nor does it appear to be in accord with the *modus vivendi* suggested by one of the Congress journals in Bengal for Mahommedan cooperation. One of the suggestions was that 'in my case they' (*i.e.* the two communities) 'should never cry out when any undue favour is shown by Government to either of them.'

The memorialists do not appear to overstate their claim when they say that 'in any kind of representation, direct or indirect (the share accorded to the Mussulman community) should be commensurate, not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution they make to the defence of the Empire; and that in this connection due consideration should be given to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.'

The general interests of the different nationalities of India under British rule are identical, but the Mahommedans have special interests besides; and their claims with regard to these can be represented in a satisfactory manner only by competent men of their own faith enjoying the confidence of the bulk of their people. Hitherto, with very rare exceptions, Mahommedan members have been nominated by Government. Considering the difficulties which surround the task, it must be admitted the selections have, on the whole, been remarkably successful. But it cannot be denied that under the system of nomination the representation of Mahommedans has by no means been adequate. In the Legislative Council of Bengal, if I am not mistaken, there are seven Hindu members to two Mahommedans; in the Legislative Council of the United Provinces five Hindus and two Mahommedans; in the Legislative Council of Bombay, nine Hindus and Parsees and two Mahommedans. In the Madras Legislative Council, out of twenty members eight are Hindus and one a Mahommedan.

The reply of the Viceroy gives the Mahommedans the assurance that in the remodelling of the constitution their claims to proper representation would be fully borne in mind. It is therefore necessary to consider how that object can be best attained. With the extension of the principle of election, the position of a nominated member could hardly fail to become invidious; his opinions and his vote would be discounted as that of a Government nominee. The memorialists have pointed out with conclusive force that, to leave the election of Mahommedan members in the hands of electoral bodies as at present constituted, would reduce the principle to absurdity. The only possible solution—the only means, in fact, of ensuring the proper and fair representation of the Mahommedan element in the Viceregal and Provincial Councils—is by confining to the several communities the election of their own representatives. Any other system would land the State in confusion and leave the Mahommedans stranded.

Whilst ordinarily the choice or representatives should be left to the two communities separately, the power of nomination should be retained for remedying the balance whenever occasion may arise for its exercise.

The election of members for the Provincial Councils should, I submit, be confided to the following classes of individuals :

(*a*) Mahommedan members of the district and municipal boards, members of the learned professions, merchants, and persons holding

office under Government with an emolument of more than a hundred rupees a month.

(*b*) Pensioners drawing an allowance of not less than fifty rupees a month.

(*c*) Persons deriving a permanent income of a hundred rupees a month from house or landed property.

(*d*) Graduates of the Universities of five years' standing.

(*e*) Oriental scholars who have held scholarship of fifty rupees a month not otherwise disqualified.

(*f*) Holders of any title or distinction from Government.

With regard to Mahommedan representation in the imperial Legislative Council, the memorialists make an important submission. They urge that the proportion of Mahommedan 'represenlives should not be determined on the basis of the numerical strength of the community, and that in any case the Mahommedan representatives should never be an ineffective minority.' And they suggested that the election should be entrusted to an electoral body composed of 'Mahommedan landowners, lawyers, merchants, and representatives of other important interests of a status to be determined by Government, Mahommedan members of the Provincial Councils, and Mahommedan fellows of the Universities. To my mind it would be simple, certainly less complicated, to leave the election in the hands of the Mussulman members of the several provincial councils, but the field of selection should not be confined to their own body.

These suggestions are submitted as mere tentative hints for the consideration of the commission to whom has been confided the task of devising a practical scheme which would safeguard the interests and satisfy the reasonable aspirations of all communities. In the decision regarding the proportion in which the different elements should be represented, a variety of considerations will naturally enter. At a time when unrest and excitement in one province which has derived the greatest benefit from British rule wears the appearance of developing into strife and disorder, the qualities of self-restraint, of a spirit of compromise and some conception of the limitation to political activity will probably not be overlooked.

The election of members to the Councils does not offer to my mind the same difficulty as that to the District and Local Boards, which, to use the language of the memorialists, forms as it were 'the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government'. Hitherto Mahommedan representation on these bodies has been to them a constant source of heart-burning. And it will continue to be until the proportion of members from two communities is definitely fixed and the election left to them separately.

The memorialists have put so clearly the case of the Mahommedans as regards representation in the public service, the Councils, and the Local Bodies, that it may appear somewhat ungracious to call attention to what seems an ommission. For there is no illusion in the memorial to the defective administration of Mahommedan law in the British Indian Courts of Justice.

The appointment of qualified Mahommedans to the High Courts of India is unquestionably a matter of importance; and the memorialists are right in their contention that, having regard to the fact that learned Bengali lawyers sit on the bench in the Punjab Chief Court and High Court of Allahabad, there is no reason what so ever against taking a competent Mahommedan from the Punjab or Allahabad to the other provinces, and vice versa. Nor ought it to be overlooked that the community of language, sentiment, and traditions places the Mahommedans of the different provinces on a common platform, and constitutes them in an emphatic sense one nationality.

But in my opinion the proper administration of Mahommedan law will not be placed on a satisfactory basis until there is a large increase in the number of Mahommedans in the ranks of the subordinate judiciary.

Twenty-four years ago, in connection with these questions, I ventured to make in the columns of this Review the following remarks :

'The depressed and despairing condition of the Mahommedan demands the serious attention of Government, and should not be dealt with longer in the *dilettante* way which has hitherto been the fashion, but in a real earnest manner. A nation consisting of upwards of fifty millions of souls, 'with great traditions, but without a career', deprived by slow degrees of wealth and influence by a policy of mistaken sentimentalism, mixed with a contemptuous disregard for popular feelings, must always constitute an important factor in the administration of India. It is this factor which cannot be ignored, and which must be taken into account by Government in all future projects for the well-being of India.'[1]

To-day the most influential organ in the English press repeats the warning in stronger language :

'We have now reached a stage where assurance will be quite valueless unless they are backed by deeds. If the Indian Government does not retain the confidence of loyal minorities by a steady and consistent policy, then, in words recently quoted in our columns, we may expect to see the Mahommedans either join the Congress or set up a second agitation of their own.'

The eventful success, however, of the constitutional movement inaugurated by the Deputation rates on the Mussulmans themselves and their prominent men. Occasional and sporadic efforts of this kind will lead to no permanent result. Measures change with men. To watch over the development of the Mahommedan people, to protect their interests, to see that their claims to equitable treatment are not neglected, to work loyally with the Government, and, in a spirit of fairness and compromise, with all other communities in the promotion of the common welfare, they should have permanent and influential associations in every district and in every province acting in conjunction with and under the guidance of a central organisation located in

[1] A Cry from the Iadian Mahommedans, August 1882. According to the last census, the Mahommedan population directly subject to British exceeds sixty two millions.

some place like Aligarh, which focusses at this moment the intellectual life and political activity of the Mahommedans of India.

Source **: Ameer Ali Dawn of a New Policy in India, *The Nineteenth Century and After*, November 1906.**

36

LETTER FROM W. A. J. ARCHBOLD TO DUNLOP SMITH
4 December 1906

Ziauddin is an old student of ours on his way back from Europe here. He will take up work as a Professor of the College, teaching high Mathematics and Physics when he arrives.... He obtained very high distinctions at Cambridge ending with Isaac Newton Studentship.

The Mahommedans of India are very proud of him, and hence I have no doubt various people, desirable and otherwise, have got hold of him. He is intensely keen on Mahommedan education. You may guess then that, if he gets into the society of keen nationalist, they may twist what he says into direction other than those he intends....

...My own opinion is that he is a pure scholar and educationalist or rather simple nature who might be taken advantage of by others.

Source **: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.**

37

LETTERS FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO ARCHBOLD

I
11 December 1906

Ziauddin has kept away from all British authorities and called on him (Lord Cromer) only the day before he left for India. He says he was in constant communication with all the leading members of the Pan-Islamic movement. The explanation he gave at his interview Lord Cromer considered unsatisfactory.

II
14 December 1906

Lord Cromer told Ziauddin that all the time he had been in Cairo he

had never called at the Agency and had associated with that class of Mahommedans who is most of all opposed to the principles which it is sought to inculcate at the Aligarh College and also most hostile to British Government. (Lord) Cromer writes that the interview rather increased the unfavourable impression he had formed of Ziauddin Ahmed, whom he told he would write to the Viceroy giving an account of his behaviour.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

38

LETTERS FROM ARCHBOLD TO DUNLOP SMITH

I
15 December 1906

Ziauddin is here now and is buried in educational project. He is simple sort of man; no politician.

He is much concerned about Lord Cromer, and raised the question frankly with me. Lord Cromer, he says, complained :

(1) That he had not been to see him sooner and had seen the khedive through other means.

(2) That he was by way of be being interested in Pan-Islamism.

(3) That he had consorted with undesirable people.

Ziauddin gave me explanation as to each showing at the worst to my thinking that he knew little of the world, and that he had perhaps not been very wise. So I promised to write to L. Cromer and explain matters.

We are preparing for the Mahommedan Educational Conference at Dacca. We are most anxious to keep politics entirely out of it, but it may not be easy.

II
21 December 1906

Ziauddin has gone to Dacca now, seeing Sir J. P. L. A. Touche on the way I leave here for Dacca on Sunday night.... If you like, I can arrange for Ziauddin to see you as he comes back and I can see you if there is anything that needs talking about.

Kindly remember that Dr. Ziauddin does not know of your letters to me and perhaps it is best that he should not know. He knows, however, that L. Cromer has written to the Government of India, because Lord Cromer told him that he was going to do so.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1906.

39

A MOSLEM CONFEDERACY : NAWAB OF DACCA'S SCHEME

I am aware of several instances wherein untold mischief has occurred through irresponsible Mahommedan gentlemen, and Associations sprung up and created by some (who really at heart have no regard for our community) for the sole purpose of establishing their own political importance, addressing Government and the public without any one to question their right to do so. While of course Government cannot refuse to receive any representation from any corporate body or individual, however, distinguished or undistinguished they or he may be, yet such representation fails to carry weight owing to the authorities not knowing how far the views contained therein are consonant with the views of the Mahommedan community as a whole. If there were an All-India Association of the kind I propose, Government will be able to refer to it all such representations which may be received by the authorities to ascertain the views of the community in general before finally passing orders thereon, and there will then be no danger of any party or parties misrepresenting facts to serve individual interests.

AIMS AND OBJECTS

It is absolutely necessary that the aims and objects of this Association should be definitely stated. And although I am sure I shall not receive the hearty support of some of my co-religionists, yet I for one honestly believe that the time has come when, if the Association is to be a force and power for good, it must at the very outset lay down its policy and object, and I would do so as follows :

That the sole object and purpose of the Association shall be to, whenever possible, support all measures emanating from the Government and to protect the cause and advance the interest of our co-religionists throughout the country.

(*a*) To controvert the growing influence of the so-called Indian National Congress, which has a tendency to misinterpret and subvert the British Rule in India or which may lead to that deplorable situation, and (*b*) To enable our young men of education, who for want of such an association, have joined the Congress camp, to find scope, on account of their fitness and ability, for public life.

The constitution of the body is then dealt with, and it is suggested that :

The confederacy shall consist of patrons, life-members and members, and its administrative body shall consist of a Council of President, six Vice-Presidents, and a working committee of thirty members, two Secretaries and a Treasurer, the Council to be appointed every year, the gentlemen retiring

being eligible for re-election.

	Per annum Rs.
The fee to be declared as Patron shall be	1,000
The fee to be declared as Life-member	100
The fee to be declared as member	10
The fee for holding an office other than that of a President or a Secretary.	30

I have no objection, to the number of the Vice-Presidents or of Committee being increased, but I think the number I have given will be a thoroughly working body. I think we may safely count not only on a hundred but quite two hundred if not more who will gladly for the sake of Islam become the patrons of the Society.

That the Confederacy as above formed shall be the supreme authority to adjudicate and decide any dispute and misunderstanding occurring or arising in any of its recognised Associations. This is followed by a suggestion that twenty-five per cent of the annual net income of all recognised Associations should be placed at the disposal and for the purpose and object of the Confederacy, and the Nawab remarks that this 'will be a source of income which no Association can grumble at, for its contribution only adds to the resources of the Confederacy, the aims and objects of which are the same as those of the Association itself.

The method of working is summed up as follows :

The Confederacy will carry on its work somewhat on the lines of the various Chambers of Commerce, the British Indian Association, etc., etc. Its Executive Council during the course of the year having the authority to address Government and public bodies on all questions of paramount interest to the country and particularly those affecting the Mahommedan community; to explain to the people when necessary through the recognised Association measures of Government affecting the welfare of the country and will take every step to advance the moral and material interests affecting the prosperity of the Mahommedan community and particularly to bring into prominence fully educated and other otherwise highly qualified young Mahommedans of promise and ability, and at its annual meeting the President will at the time of the annual report deliver the address on the year's work.

Source : The Pioneer, 15 December 1906.

40

THE INAUGURAL SESSION OF THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE

30 December 1906

(The foundation of the All-India Muslim League was laid at Shah Bagh, Dacca, on 30 December 1906 at a political meeting held after the conclusion of the All-India Muslim Educational Conference under the presidentship of Mr. Justice Sharafuddin of the Calcutta High Court. In fact, the programme of the Educational Conference had been cut short by one day in order to provide a working day for the Muslim League, since some of the leaders had refused to hold such important discussions is the evenings when they were tired after a day's work. On or about 17 December 1906, the delegates and members attending the Educational Conference were informed that the 27th, 28th and 29th of December were allotted for the conference sitting only, and the 30th exclusively for a political sitting. The Muslims were asked to go to Dacca in large numbers because consultations about the political association would be held there. The account of the proceedings was compiled by Maulana Mohamed Ali in a pamphlet entitled the Green Book.)

When the 20th session of the All-India Mahommedan Educational Conference was over, the delegates assembled in the Pandal on 30 December to discuss the formation of a political organization of the Muslims. The gathering was as large as it was representative. The Pandal was over-crowded in spite of the fact that the majority of visitors from other parts of India were to leave Dacca by the mid-day special for Calcutta, and the meeting was unavoidably late by an hour. The time for the formal discussion was short, but informal discussion had been going on for the last four days in the Conference Camp, in which every word of the resolutions to be brought forward for adoption had been discussed and rediscussed several times. At 9 a.m. the Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca rose to propose the election of the Chairman. He said :

Gentlemen, you all know the reason of our assembling here in such large numbers from every nook and corner of India. I need not therefore reiterate the purpose of this Meeting. I have, however, to thank you for the trouble you have taken to come all this long way. We have to elect a Chairman for to-day's deliberations, and I think our choice cannot be improved upon if I suggest for your approval the distinguished name of Nawab Mushtaq-ul-Mulk (sic) who was one of the leading statesmen of Hyderabad, where he had served the Government of the Premier Chief, H.H. the Nizam, so ably and righteously. Even during his tenure of office there he had devoted his energies to the educational progress of his co-religionists, and

since his retirement he had wholly given himself up to the work of the community, both in education and politics. He was the moving spirit of the Political Association that was agreed to be formed in 1901, and in my opinion, and I believe in the opinion of all of us assembled here, nobody would be a fitter Chairman than the venerable Mushtaq-ul-Mulk Bahadur (meaning Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, Maulvi Mushtaq Husain Bahadur).

Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haque, then spoke as follows :

I am sure you do not expect me to say much in seconding this proposal. I would only add that the young men are thirsting for the fight, and so it is most necessary that the leaders should be old and experienced veterans who could properly regulate the exuberant energies of youth. And who could be more qualified to do this than the venerable Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur. We are therefore as well seeking a good omen for the future, as stamping our deliberation to-day with the stamp of sanity and sobriety, in electing the old Nawab as our Chairman.

The motion was then put to the vote and unanimously carried, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk taking the Chair amidst loud applause.

The Chairman then rose to make the inaugural speech. He said :

I have no words with which to thank you for the honour you have done me in electing me as your Chairman to-day. The place could have well been filled by many others in the community who are present here, but now that you have commanded me to fill it, I can only obey your wishes and discharge the duties of a Chairman of such an assembly to the best of my powers. I have, however, to thank the Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca specially, for the title which he has unconsciously given to me. I have my dobuts about being Viqar-ul-Mulk or 'the pride of the country', but I can assure you I am, as I have always been, 'Mushtaq-ul-Mulk' or 'the lover of my country'. To us old men creeping every day nearer and nearer to our graves, what is left to do, but to be Mushtaq-ul-Mulk and Mushtaq-ul-Qaum, lovers of our country and lovers of our race. I feel that the unwitting recognition of my love of my people, for which I have to thank my Hon'ble friend the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, is my greatest claim to fill the chair you are now offering me. May I long deserve this title.

I believe you all know what you have come to discuss. As this deliberation on political questions will be a free one, I trust no person who is a Government servant will take part in it, as the tie which binds him to the Government precludes the possibility of our regarding him free in the sense in which non-official members of any community can be. Moreover, the discussion of such grave problems requires maturity and experience on the part of us all, so that young men who are still in school and college cannot be expected to offer to us a fair share of either. At the present stage of their lives they should learn and not teach. They should therefore not be encouraged to leave the hard task of mastering things for the more pleasant one, perhaps, of dictating to others. When they have graduated and stepped into the arena of the world,

we shall welcome their participation but not yet. So, if there is any gentleman present here who is a Government servant, he should withdraw, and if he is a student in a college or school, I shall request him not to come forward to participate actually in this discussion.

Gentlemen, that which has drawn us here to-day is not a need which has only now been felt by us. When the National Congress was founded in India, this need had even then been felt, and the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, to whose foresight and statesmanship Mussulmans should always be grateful, had made great endeavours to impress upon Mussulmans the belief that their safety and prosperity lay in their keeping aloof from the Congress. This view has been proved to be so far right that though Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is no more among us, the Mahommedans are still firm in that belief, and as time passes they will feel more and more that, in order to protect and advance their political rights and interests, it will be necessary for them to form their own separate organization. Five years ago, in October 1901, some Mussulmans from various provinces had assembled at Lucknow, and, after careful consideration of the matter, they had come to the conclusion that the time for the formation of such an organization had come, and consequently the work of organizing such a body in the United Provinces was going on when new events followed close upon each other in Bengal; and impressed by the commotion caused by the direct and indirect influence of the National Congress, and finding that the Government intended to increase the representative element in its Legislative Councils, Mussulmans, as a community, sent a Deputation to the Viceroy to Simla last October, and represented their needs, and the disadvantages under which their community had been labouring, before His Excellency. All these proceedings, together with the Viceroy's reply to the Deputation, have already been fully reported in the press and made familiar to the country. I need not allude to them in detail now. On that occasion, those representatives of the community who had assembled as members of the Deputation had, after a careful consideration of the ways and means by which the political rights and interests of their co-religionists could be permanently safeguarded, decided that in December next, delegates from different provinces should be asked to assemble at Dacca and discuss this momentous question. In the mean time, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca had framed a scheme for the same purpose and circulated it for our consideration. To-day we have assembled here to settle finally the lines of action in a question the settlement of which has so long been postponed.

Before I proceed with the work we have in hand to-day, I feel it necessary to say that no matter what the general principles of British administration may be, and no matter what rights may be vouchsafed by the generosity and love of justice of the British nation to its Indian subjects, we who have not yet forgotten the tradition of our own recent rule in India elsewhere, and are more intimately acquainted than other communities of India with the proper relations which should subsist between the Government and its subjects, should

accept it as a rule of our conduct that the plant of the political rights of a subject race thrives best in the soil of loyalty, and consequently the Mussulmans should prove themselves loyal to their Government before they can ask for a recognition of any of their rights. The Mussulmans are only a fifth in number as compared with the total population of the country, and it is manifest that if at any remote period the British Government ceases to exist in India, then the rule of India would pass into the hands of that community which is nearly four times as large as ourselves. Now, gentlemen, let each of you consider what will be your condition if such a situation is created in India. Then, our life, our property, our honour, and our faith will all be in great danger. When even now that a powerful British administration is protecting its subjects, we the Mussulmans have to face most serious difficulties in safeguarding our interests from the grasping hands of our neighbours, instances of which are not rare in any province or district, then woe betide the time when we become the subjects of our neighbours, and answer to them for the sins, real and imaginary, of Aurangzeb, who lived and died two centuries ago, and other Mussulman conquerors and rulers who went before him. And to prevent the realization of such aspirations on the part of our neighbours, the Mussulmans cannot find better and surer means than to congregate under the banner of Great Britain, and to devote their lives and property in its protection. I must confess, gentlemen, that we shall not be loyal to this Government for any unselfish reasons; but that it is through regard for our own lives and property, our own honour and religion that we are impelled to be faithful to the Government; and consequently the best security for our good faith is the undoubted fact that our own prosperity is bound up with, and depends upon our loyalty to British rule in India. I shall be the last person, gentlemen, to suspect our neighbours of evil intensions, but I do not hesitate in declaring that unless the leaders of the Congress make sincere efforts as speedily as possible, to quell the hostility against the Government and the British race, which is fast increasing in a large body of their followers, the necessary consequence of all that is being openly done and said to-day will be that sedition would be rampant, and the Mussulmans of India would be called upon to perform the necessary duty of combating this rebellious spirit, side by side with the British Government, more effectively than by the mere use of words.

It is however our duty towards our neighbours that as far as our influence may reach and our persuasion may work, we must prevent our friends and neighbours from going on the wrong path, and as their neighbours it is always one of our first duties to deal with them with fairness and courtesy and, without prejudice to our legitimate rights and interests, to carry on with them an intimate social intercourse, maintain our sympathy, and strictly avoid all forms of hostility towards them. I would go even a step further and impress upon you gentlemen, that there is no quarrel between us and the National Congress and the Congress people, nor do we oppose or disagree with every

one of their acts and views. Indeed we are thankful to them for the efforts which they have made in causes common to us both, and procured certain advantages in which they and we have equally shared, and it is quite possible that we may regard in the future a part of their programme perfectly justified. All the differences that now exist between us and them, or shall exist at a future date, must fall under one or other of three heads. Either they will relate to those demands of theirs which, if granted would endanger the continuance of British rule in India; or they will relate to those efforts of theirs which are directed against our own legitimate interests; or they will fall under the head of that want of moderation and respect which are due from the subjects to their sovereign. And this leads me to say that we must bear in mind that moderation and respectfulness shall have to be the essential characteristics of any political organization which the Mussulmans assembled here to-day would form. I cannot help recalling the pleasure which I experienced when, in reply to the Address of the Mussulman's deputation to the Viceroy, of which I had the honour to be a member, His Excellency said that Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal had behaved with remarkable moderation and courtesy under the most trying circumstances, and I have to congratulate the Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca and the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury on a result so eminently successful, which was brought about by their own efforts and the great influence they wield in Eastern Bengal; and we can all rely that this influence will be used in the future, as it has been in the past, on the side of moderation, law, justice, and courtesy.

The Chairman then called upon the Nawab of Dacca to move the first Resolution :

RESOLUTION I

Resolved that this meeting, composed of Mussulmans from all parts of India, assembled at Dacca, decides that a political Association be formed, styled All India Muslim League, for the furtherance of the following objects :

(*a*) To promote, among the Mussulmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of its measures.

(*b*) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Mussulmans of India, and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.

(*c*) To prevent the rise, among the Mussulmans of India, of any feeling of hostility towards other communities, without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League.

In moving this Resolution Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca spoke as follows :

You who have assembled here in a remote corner of the country not very easy of access, after having travelled many hundreds of miles from every part of India, drawn by some great impulse, do not need to be told by me in any detail that there exists a special necessity at this moment for an increased political activity on the part of us all. Whosoever is in touch with the affairs of this country and our community must feel the thrill of new life which has, as if by magic, galvanized our community. India seems to be on the eve of a new era of public life, and the Mahommedans who suffered so far from a kind of suspended animation, feel to-day the revivifying effect of a general awakening.

To a casual observer it may appear that we have only just made a start in public life; and those who do not bear us much goodwill have sometimes paid us the compliment of regarding us as mere automations, and attributed this show of new activity to the wire-pulling of others. But those who have studied our affairs more closely will not regard the new movement as a first start, so much as a turning of a corner of the course. It was only last evening that we wound up the work of the 20th session of our Educational Conference, and if the earlier efforts of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan be taken into account, our present activity is but a natural development of the work begun nearly half a century ago. As regards the suggestion that this new phase of our public activity is due to external causes, I must admit a confession is due from the Mahommedans of India. It is certainly due in part to the trend of events over which we had little control; but this is no more than saying that if there is any one at all to blame, it is not we who are to blame for this general commotion among the Mahommedans. Our new activity is only like the increased vigilance of the police in a district where disregard for the laws of property is fast spreading. Had the party now in power in England been familiar with the position and rights of the Mahommedans of India, and has those among our countrymen who have hitherto been taking a prominent part in the public life of this country been consistently just in asking for the allotment of their respective shares to the various communities of India, it is not improbable that the League which it is now proposed to form would not have been heard of for a long time, if at all; and that we would have gone on pursuing the traditional policy of our people and attending solely to our educational needs. But it is manifest that gross ignorance prevails in England regarding the real condition of India, and only those have a chance of being heard at that distance who cry the loudest in this country. Quiet and unobstrusive work is at a discount; and much as any other method than what has hitherto been associated with us may be disagreeable to our community, we are forced to adopt that which is most effective in the realization of our aims. Similarly, it is noticeable that the interests of the minority have often been disregarded by a pushing majority, if deliberately, then through oversight, or as I think, through the natural desire of the majority to work for those interests which are nearest

and dearest to it, namely, its own. It is quite possible that our friends, the Hindus, may repudiate any suggestion of such disregard of our interests, but you, gentlemen, who have come to Eastern Bengal, unprejudiced and unbiased, may in many cases even sceptical or the facts as represented by myself and others who aired a grievance, have been I am assured, convinced in the most practical manner by your own observation that in one part of India at least the grievance is real and has not been overstated.

As I have said, this movement of the Mussulmans of India is nothing new or strange. I was surprised to read, only a few days ago, that as early as in 1893, our revered leader, the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, had felt the need of a separate political organization for the Muslims of India; while it is only too well-known that as early as in 1887, his great speech at Lucknow kept the Mahommedans back and stopped them from joining the so-called National Congress. It is only now that I, for one, have been forced, by the practical needs of our community during the crisis through which we in Eastern Bengal are passing, to believe in the urgent necessity of a separate political organization for the Mahommedans of India which the far-sighted Sir Syed Ahmed had felt more than a decade ago. There were then before us four alternatives : (1) to take no part in politics, and leave to the Government the task of safeguarding our interests; (2) to step into the arena, and take up an attitude of direct hostility to the Hindus; (3) to join the National Congress and do what they did; and (4) to form a separate organization of our own. The third alternative, namely, joining the Congress, was declared even in 1887 to be out of the question, and no one can say that we have wavered since then in our belief; and even our worst enemies cannot say that we have ever followed the second alternative of taking up an attitude of hostility towards any other community. Out of the other two alternatives, in 1887, we were certainly in favour of a policy of 'masterly inactivity' as regards politics; but the disadvantages of such a quiescence forced themselves upon our attention before long, and in 1893; we decided under the leadership of Syed Ahmed Khan to form a separate political organization, called the 'Defence Association'. But then, as before, our aim was defence not defiance; and, to guard still further against the dangers of political activity in a half-educated and war-like race, such safeguards were devised as almost paralysed the organization even for purposes of defence. To this, gentlemen, I should like to draw your attention, as, though we may now be compelled to remove some of the safeguards devised in 1893, I am anxious to impress upon your minds that the spirit of those safeguards, the spirit of caution, will still be as essential a part of our activity.

In 1893, we were naturally very anxious to impress upon the British Government that we were loyal subjects and law-abiding citizens, for it was considered that our rulers had some doubts on the subjects, which, however unnecessary, were perhaps not wholly unnatural at the time. Again, education had not toned down the passions of a war-like community, and turned

the irascible temper of a newly fallen race into a sweet reasonableness. There was, in addition, the great danger of our giving up the difficult and constructive work of education in favour of the easy task of a destructive critic in politics. The need of self-help might then have been ignored on account of the less taxing effort of criticizing others. The endeavour to deserve might then have been paralysed by the intensity of the desire to obtain. The voice of the reformer might have been drowned in the babel of the demagogue.

To-day the aspect of affairs has greatly changed. The Government has been convinced of our steadfast loyalty under the most trying situations. In 1897, Lord Elgin bore testimony to the unflinching fidelity of the Mahommedan troops that opposed their own co-religionists on the battle-fields of Chitral and the borderland, and shed their own blood and the blood of their brothers for their king and country. This, gentlemen, was a situation which no other community has had a chance of being tried in. If, then, we have special claims on the Government, it is because the test of our loyalty has been specially searching and unique. From those who were considered so dangerous at one time as to be allowed no other career than that of the ploughman in the fields, we have risen so much in the estimation of our rulers that leading statesmen of England call us the forces of loyalty in India and one of the greatest assets of the Empire, some portion of which has been won with our own support, and the whole of which we are guarding to-day. It is no more necessary to waste whole regiments in the interior in order to guard against an imaginary danger or rebellion, and the Commander-in-Chief can set free with a light heart the major portion of our army for guarding the frontier of the Empire.

As regards education, although we have not achieved all that we desire, we do not at least belong to the category of barbaric hordes which it was at one time the fashion of some people to regard us. Our passions, though they are even now those of a war-like race that curved out Empires, wherever its flag was unfurled and the sound of its kettle-drums was heard, are more under our control than we could assume them to be even 50 years ago. We can respect the restraints which law has devised for the peace of the land, though even now we shall not be making, like some other communities, a virtue of the necessity. I am afraid the danger of our neglecting the best means of advancing our political rights and interests, namely by education, still exists; but we can safely leave the renowned leader of our community, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk Bahadur, and his colleagues and the old students of the Aligarh College, to combat that danger as they have hitherto been doing, and to work on with a will in order to found our future university, which will be an even more unique and splendid constructive work than the Aligarh College, which has no equal in India.

In short, gentlemen, we are to-day prepared to enter on a political career as a community which the spirit of the times impels us to do. A more

active propaganda, a more candid statement of our needs and aspirations, and the giving of a more public and more representative character to our Political Association, are more necessary to-day than was the case in 1893. But nothing of the spirit of loyalty is lost thereby, and no amount of candour shall rob us of our traditional courtesy. The resolution which I have the honour of moving to-day has been so framed that the object of our League is frankly the protection and advancement of our political rights and interests, but without prejudice to the traditional loyalty of Mussulmans to the Government, and goodwill to our Hindu neighbours. Whenever it is necessary to do so, we shall represent our views to the Government, and respectfully submit our claims for due consideration. But whenever the intention of any measure of Government is misunderstood by our people, it shall equally be our duty to remove that misconception. Those interests which we have in common with other communities will be advanced by us in common with them, and those additional interests which are exclusively ours will be advanced exclusively by us, though we shall advance them both through our League. But just as we shall be respectful and moderate in the representation of our views to the Government, so shall we be just and fair to the other communities whose interests may clash with ours. This latter contingency may by some be regarded as a remote one, but at any rate it is possible, and it is on this account that the formation of a separate organization of the Mussulmans is necessary. I cannot conceive that the ultimate interests of the various communities of India could ever conflict, but their immediate interests are, and shall often be at variance; and unless each community looks after itself, it can have no chance of achieving or retaining what is, by right, its own. This is only natural, and it is only on this account that our neighbours are asking for self-government. Can they, then, with any show of consistency, deny to us what they so vehemently claim for themselves ?

In conclusion, gentlemen, I must say that only after a central League like the one proposed to be formed to-day comes into existence, can the Government find a representative body to which to turn for ascertaining the views of the Mussulmans of India, and to which the Mussulmans themselves can turn for consistent and firm support, sensible and sincere advice, and a true interpretation of the wishes of the Government. The materials have, for long, been ready, but only now shall we be able to rear from them the mighty and splendid fabric of a united people. And the spirit of the League be the spirit of our poet who said :

Azad-rao hun aur mera maslak hai sulhi kul
Hargiz Kabhi kisi se adavat nahin mujhe.

Hakim Ajmal Khan seconded this resolution. He said, 'I have nothing to add to the able speech of the Nawab Bahadur. The resolution itself is so clear, and its motives so apparent, that I shall only be reiterating what has already been said. I would therefore merely say that I second the resolution,

and leave it for open discussion.'

Mr. Zafar Ali made a speech in support of the resolution.

Sahebzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, supported the resolution, but wished to amend clause (c) substituting for the words 'to prevent the rise among the Mussulmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities.'

Sheikh Abdullah seconded the amendment.

Mr. Mohamed Ali explained that the words of the amendment only pointed out a method of 'preventing the rise among the Mussulmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities', and the amendment was therefore wholly covered by the language of the original resolution. On this the amendment was withdrawn. The original resolution was put to the vote, and passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION II

Resolved that a Provincial Committee be formed consisting of the following gentlemen, with powers to add to their number, with a view to frame within four months from this date, a Constitution for the League :

JOINT SECRETARIES

Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk
Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk.

MEMBERS

Eastern Bengal : The Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah (Dacca)
The Hon'ble Choudhury Nawab Ali (Mymensingh)
Moulvi Himayat-ud-din (Barisal).

Assam : Maulvi Abdul Majid, B.A. (Sylhet).

Western Bengal : Mr. Abdur Rahim, Bar-at-Law (Calcutta)
Nawab Nasir-ud-din Khayal (Calcutta)
Nawab Amir Hossain (Calcutta)
Mr. Shams-ul-Huda, Vakil (Calcutta)
Mr. Abdul Hamid, Editor, *Moslem Chronicle* (Calcutta).

Bihar : Mr. Ali Imam, Bar-at-Law (Patna).

Oudh : Mr. Nabi- ul-lah, Bar-at-Law (Lucknow)
Mr. Hamid Ali Khan, Bar-at-Law (Lucknow)
Nawab Imad-ul-Mulk (Bilgram)
Munshi IhtishamAli (Lucknow)
Mr. Zahur Ahmed, B.A. LL.B. (Lucknow)
Mr. Mahomed Nasim, Vakil (Lucknow)
Mr. Ghulam-us-Saqlain, B.A. LL.B. (Lucknow)
Raja Nowshad Ali Khan (Lucknow).

Agra Province : Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk (Aligarh)
Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk (Amroha)

Sahebzada Aftab Ahmed Khan, Bar-at-Law (Aligarh)
Mr. Mahomed Ishaque, B.A. LL.B. (Allahabad)
Moulvi Karamat Hussein, Bar-at-Law (Allahabad)
Mr. Abdur Raoof, Bar-at-Law (Allahabad)
Mr. Mahomed Raoof, Bar-at-Law (Allahabad)
Haji Mahomed Musa Khan (Aligarh)
Khan Bahadur Mahomed Mozammil-ul-lah Khan (Aligarh)
Mr. Abdullah Jan Vakil (Saharanpur)
Mr. Abdul Majid, Bar-at-Law (Allahabad)
Haji Ismail Khan (Aligarh)
Sheikh Abdullah, B.A. LL.B. (Aligarh).

Punjab : Mr. Mahomed Shafi, Bar-at-Law (Lahore)
Khwajah Yousaf Shah (Ludhiana)
Mr. Fazl Husain, Bar-at-Law (Lahore)
Mr. Abdul Aziz, Editor, *Observer* (Lahore)
Hakim Ajmal Khan (Delhi)
Sheikh Gholam Mohamed, Vakil (Amritsar)
Mr. Ghulam Sadiq (Amritsar).

Frontier Province : Mufti Fida Mahomed Khan, Bar-at-Law (Peshawar),
Mr. Abdul Aziz, Bar-at-Law (Peshawar).

Sindh : Mr. A. M. Dehlavi (Hyderabad).

Kathiawar : Mr. Ghulam Mahomed Munshi, Bar-at-Law (Rajkote).

Gujarat : Mr. Mohamed Ali, B.A. (Oxon)

Bombay Presidency : His Highness Sir Agha Khan (Bombay)
Nawabzada Nasr-ul-lah Khan, Bar-at-Law (Bombay)
Mr. Rafi-ud-din, Bar-at-Law (Bombay).

Madras Presidency : Khan Bahadur Abdul Hadi Badsha (Madras)
Khan Bahadur Ahmed Mohayy-ud-din (Madras)
Mr. Yakub Hasan, Proprietor of the *Muslim Patriot* (Madras)
Nawab Gholam Ahmed (Coromandel, K.G.F.)
Mr. Abdul Hamid Hasan, Editor, *Muslim Patriot* (Madras).

Orissa : Mr. Nur-ul-Haq, Secretary, Mahommedan Association (Cuttack).

Central Province : Khan Saheb Mahomed Amir Khan, Pleader (Nagpur)
Mr. H. M. Mullick (Nagpur).

Burmah : Mr. A. S. Rafiqi (Rangoon).

Mr. Nabi-ul-lah proposed this resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Ahmed Mohayy-ud-din, and carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION III

Resolved that the Provisional Committee be authorized to convene a representative meeting of Indian Mussulmans at a suitable time and place foi the consideration and adoption of the constitution framed in this manner.

The resolution was proposed by Mr. Hasan Imam, seconded by Mr.

Mahomed Ishaq, and carried *nem. com.*

RESOLUTION IV

Resolved that this meeting in view of the clear interest of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal, considers that the Partition is sure to prove beneficial to the Mahommedan community which constitutes the vast majority of that Province and that all such methods of agitation as boycotting should be strongly condemned and discouraged.

This Resolution was moved by Khwaja Ghulam-us-Saqlain, seconded by Mr. Ghulam Sadiq and supported by several speakers. It was carried unanimously.

Votes of thanks were then passed for the Chairman and for the Nawab of Dacca, and the meeting dissolved.

Source : Green Book No. 1, prepared by Mohammed Ali, Indian Daily Telegraph Press, Lucknow 1907.

41

THE ENGLISHMAN ON THE DACCA CONFERENCE

On 30 December 1906, after the conclusion of the Educational Conference, a special meeting was called to discuss the formation of a Political Association of Mahommedans. The meeting began about two hours after the advertised time, but was not enthusiastic. The speeches were clear and forcible, the packed audience listening with the greatest attention. The debate was keen and every point was followed with interest. Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk made a graceful little speech thanking the Nawab of Dacca for his splendid hospitality the like of which he had not experienced elsewhere. He expressed satisfaction at the spirit and enthusiasm shown by the people of the new Province whom he had been told before were backward, ignorant, stupid and feckless, but who, under the new conditions of freedom, were bound to go far and fare well. The Nawab of Dacca then requested Viqar-ul-Mulk to take the Chair. The President, who spoke in Urdu, in an introductory speech said that there was no need to enlarge upon the subject they met to discuss. Time and circumstances made it necessary for Mahommedans to unite in an association so as to make their voice heard above the din of other vociferous parties in India and across the wide seas to England. Unless united in support of one another and working in loyal unison with the

Government of India, the Muslim majority who, through misfortunes and errors, had fallen from their once high estate, were in danger of being submerged by the enormous Hindu flood. Of the vital necessities of education he had spoken. Now they were concerned with matters political. In education and politics all Muslims, old and young, were concerned, but the direct business of youth was education. Theirs was not while students to make their voices heard in the political arena. In their immaturity and irresponsibility youth were to be discouraged here as dangerous and needless. When they acquired wisdom, width of outlook and sobriety then their turn would come. As the young gentleman who had seconded the Nawab of Dacca's proposal that he should take the Chair had said, youth was too hot, too frothy, therefore, unless mature wisdom and experience guided its councils, dangerous and ineffective. Advantage and every safety of the Mahommedans lay in loyalty to the Government. So much was their cause bound up with that of the British Raj that they must be prepared to fight and die for the Government if necessary. None knew that they might not yet be called on to do so. The political outlook of India was full of peril. At the present moment the air was full of thunder. The Mahommedans, whilst uniting and making their carefully considered wants heard, must maintain sanity and courtesy. The more revolutionary tendencies now rife in the country should be condemned and discouraged by all. There was at the same time no need for unreasonable bitterness of hostility against other parties. In safeguarding our cause, maintaining cordial relations with Government, who had made and kept India what it was—a land of peace, of equity, of opportunity and freedom, and where anarchy would ensue and the final ruin of Mahommedans if British Rule were for an hour removed—Mahommedans were doing their sacred duty. Their motto was 'Defence not Defiance'. Mahommedans were with the Congress where the action of the Congress was for the good of the public and the Empire, but they reprobated utterly all rabid, senseless opposition to Government. The cause of the Mahommedans was the cause of the British, the sympathies of Government were with Mahommedans The Viceroy's reply to the Simla deputation, the logical consequence of which was this meeting, was full of encouragement for Mahommedans. His friend the Nawab of Dacca would now explain the scheme which would greatly strengthen the Muslim position and at the same time prove of great assistance to the rulers of this country in the accomplishment of their splendid but onerous and delicate task.

The Nawab of Dacca, rising introduced the resolution in a lengthy speech. He said that a special necessity called for increased political activity of the Muslim community. All were in touch in India and Mahommedans felt a thrill of new life galvanizing the community. India was on the eve of a new era—a Mahommedan awakening from coma. The movement was not new, but the turning point of course was the result of the work of Sir Syed Ahmed. The new political movement had been forced on them. Had the party not in

power in England been familiar with the position of Muslims, had Indian public men justly represented Muslim claims, the movement might perhaps not have been heard of, but quiet unobstrusive work was at a discount. Only those who cried loudest had a chance of being heard. The Muslims therefore were forced against their own wishes to abandon the traditional policy in order to secure easement of very real disabilities and to avoid the danger of their interest being neglected, whilst other Indians benefited. There had been a time when the formation of such a political union as now proposed was not unattended with some peril, and was inadvisable when the community was uneducated, with passions still unrestrained, spirit of caution lacking, loyalty in places undeveloped, and the situation delicate. Twenty years had wrought a vast change. Today Government was convinced of the proven Mahommedan fealty. A great statesman had styled the Muslims as the 'force of loyalty in India, one of the great assests of the Empire'. The race still warlike, saw what 50 years ago they were ignorant of, the advantage of their position under just restraints, lawful rule, and to-day was prepared to enter a political career as a community united, enlightened, loyal, and law-abiding. The resolution he was moving was framed to secure the protection and advancement of political rights and interests without prejudice to loyalty to the rulers or good-will to their Hindu neighbours. As it shall be a moderate representation of their views to Government, so it shall be just and fair to other communities. Only after the central league as proposed came into existence can Government find a representative to-day to which to turn for ascertaining the views of Muslims, and Muslims turn for consistent, firm support, sensible, sincere advice, true interpretation of the wishes of Government. The materials had been long ready, only now were they able to rear the might and splendid fabric of a united people.

The following resolution was then read and carried with acclamation after a short debate, one or two slight amendments being held over for consideration in Committee when the scheme is being finally shaped for submission to a representative meeting, which will be held probably at Lucknow at Easter :

(a) To promote among the Mussulmans of India feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconceptions that may arise as to the intentions of Government with regard to any of its measures.

(b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Mussulmans of India and respectfully to represent their needs and aspirations to Government.

(c) To prevent the rise among the Mussulmans of India of any feelings of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other objects of the League.

Source : The Englishman, 31 December 1906.

42

JUSTICE SHAH DIN ON 'THE MAHOMMEDAN COMMUNITY : ITS POLITICAL POSITION'

Mahommedan leaders have recently been endeavouring to chalk out a definite time of political action for themselves. For a variety of reason into which it is needless to enter the political attitude of the Mahommedans has in past years been mainly one of studied aloofness from the Congress, having originated in the belief that its teachings were in various ways in conflict with important Mahommedan interests and were in dangerous advance of the political needs of the day. That attitude was on the whole productive of much political good, though, in the course of time, it brought on the inevitable result that the lack of organisation and the consequent want of exercise of political Judgment, which such a passive attitude necessarily involved, unfitted the community for taking definite and well considered action in time of need, and the disintegration which followed afforded cause for grave anxiety. While on the one hand the local sections of the population skilfully led by the Congress persistently demanded and obtained a hearing from the authorities resulting in now and then a sop being thrown to Cerberus, the Mahommedans on the other hand, gradually ceased to be regarded as a factor which had to be reckoned with in practical Indian politics, and their silent patience came to be construed into opulent contentment with their environment. Muffled complaints were heard on all sides in the community of misplaced reliance upon the sense of justice of the rulers in the land, and the partial success of the pushful and demonstrative Congress politician was often cited as an argument in favour of the need for adoption by the Mahommedan leaders of a policy of organised self-assertion. Ardent youth, born upon the strong under currents of dissatisfaction with the frigid policy of political inaction, was on the point of breaking away from its moorings with little heed for the consequences that might follow.

Meanwhile the march of events was as rapid as it was startling. The demand for a new departure, necessitated as it was by the change of the times, grew louder and louder, and the community awoke as with a start from its slumbers. The result was the careful consideration and adoption by leading Mahommedans all our India of a definite plan of concerted action, of which the first outcome was the great Mahommedan deputation which waited upon the Viceroy at Simla on the 1st October 1906. That deputation marked the dawn of a new era for the Indian Mahommedans, and the address, which was presented by the representative assemblage, embodies in unequivocal terms, some of the leading principles which underlie Mahommedan politics in India, and which serve to distinguish the essential character of the Mahommedan attitude towards British domination from that adopted by Hindu politicians

of the Congres School.

Upon basis of those principles will soon be built the modest fabric of a central Ma mmedan political organisation, which, though it will proceed upon times entirely in harmony with the expansive needs of the age and with the spirit of modern advance, will yet be the pivot and centre of an enlightened and genuine loyalty to the British cause in this country. The generous candour and sincerity of purpose, so magnanimously shown by Lord Minto in his weighty reply to the Mahommedan representation, and his subsequent action in some respects in the spirit of that reply, have greatly facilitated the solution of the Mahommedan problem in India, and happily there are visible abundant signs which serve to indicate that the bonds of sympathy between the Indian Mahommedans and their English rulers are being drawn closer together, and that the former may be better able than before to strengthen the hands and lighten the task of the latter.

Source : The Pioneer, 8 September 1907.

43

LETTER FROM SIR J. P. HEWETT, LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF UNITED PROVINCE AND OUDH TO MINTO

24 February 1907

Considerable stir has been caused by the successive visits of Mr. Tilak, Babu Bepin Chandra Pal, and Mr. Gokhale, the two former to Allahabad, the latter to several of the towns of these provinces ending up with Aligarh....

As arrangement was made...for Mr. Gokhale to lecture at Aligarh. In the course of his lecture, he observed that it was a bad thing that European Professor should conceal the work of supervising the higher learning.... A few days afterward the students at Aligarh practically revolted against their European teachers. In reporting the case the Magistrate wrote that there had been a growing feeling of opposition against the English staff, and that this had broke out on the punishment of a boy first for striking a constable at a fair etc....

The trustees have not yet sent me a report, and I have requested them to do so. My information has come from the Principal and the Magistrate. The latter thinks that Gokhle's visit had little to do with these incidents : I cannot help thinking, that it at least supplied the match which caused the explosion. Apparently some of the students have been influenced by one Mahommed Ali (Employed in Baroda State), who had been paying a long visit to Aligarh and

whose brother was expelled last year. Frequent changes in the personnel and the loss of first the late Mr. Beck and then of Mr. Morrison seem to have had a good deal to do with raising up a feeling of resentment against the English Staff...I shall report the matter officially to the Home Department and may possibly ask for the assistance of the Director General of Education to enquire into the causes of the action of the students. I am going to College myself on March 7th.

The revolt against authority at a college, which was considered so well conducted as the Aligarh College, is very disturbing,, and came as a bolt from the blue. I have lastly received a telegram purposely to come from the students professing their loyalty and their devotion to the scheme of education devised for them by Sir Syed Ahmed.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1907.

44

LETTER FROM DENZIL IBBETSON TO MINTO
23 March 1907

It is hardly possible that recent development should not effect the relations in question. And the directions in which they will affect them will depend (I think) upon whether—the young and advanced school, or the old fashioned and conservative element, eventually succeeds in controlling the general tone of the educated Mahommedan community. The struggle that is now going on between them, is well exemplified by recent events at the Aligarh College. If the former wins, there will be at least political rapprochement between Hindus and Mahommedans. If the latter, it seems almost certain that the relation will be more strained than before.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1907.

45

THE TRIBUNE ON MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S APPOINTMENT AS A FELLOW OF THE ALLAHABAD UNIVERSITY

In the brilliant galaxy of those living Indians who have distinguish themselves, either by the high eminence to which they have attained on

account of their personal merits, or by the single-minded devotion with which they have laboured for the betterment of their countrymen, few can compare with Nawab Muneer Nawaz Jung Mohsin-ud-Dowla Mohsin-ul-Mulk Maulvi Syed Mehdi Ali Khan Bahadur. Born of humble and unpretentious parents, without the blessings of modern liberal education and beginning his career from the lowest rung of the official ladder, he still raised himself to one of the highest and most responsible offices to which an Indian can aspire. Descended from a priestly house, brought up in the traditions of an ancient Mahommedan family and educated in a truly orthodox fashion along Oriental lines, he has yet grown to be the most powerful advocate of Western culture and the trusted leader of the enlightended section of the Mahommedan community. Gifted with a versatile, genuine and boundless energy, endowed with literary abilities of the highest order coupled with matchless powers of persuasion, and possessed of a nature capable of assimilating all that is good and of adapting itself to the existence of the times, the Nawab has proved himself to be at once a statesman and a man of letters, and is successfully fulfilling the arduous function of the journalist, the politician, the orator, the reformer and educationist. By the suavity of his manners and the kindliness of his disposition, he has endeared himself to all who have known him, while his immense public services have rendered him invaluable to his community. Old and infirm, worn out by anxieties, harassed by a lingering disease, still working with unabated zeal and enthusiasm, his life is a living source of inspiration to the weak and the halting. What with his brilliant powers and attainments. What with his meritorious services in the matter of Mahommedan regeneration, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk occupies a unique place in the affections of his countrymen.

Mehdi Ali belongs to a respectable Saiyed family in Etawah and was born there on the 9 December 1937, that memorable year which saw the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the British Empire and of the world. On his father's side he is connected with the noted Saiyed of Barah and on his mother's side with the Abbasees of Sheikhpore in Farrukhabad. His family was a quiet and secluded one, quite averse to the public service. Only one relation to Mehdi Ali is known to have been in Government employ, Syed Zahoor Ali, who filled the post of a Sudr-us-Sudoor about the middle of the last century and who subsequently became the Minister of Tonk under Nawab Vazir ud-Dowla, the then ruler of that State. Mehdi Ali received his early education at house. He was taught Arabic and Persian, the two principal branches of Oriental learning then in vogue, and his prococity in this direction elicited the admiration of all who saw the boy, and particularly inspired the mind of his father with the hope that his son would become a great Maulvi. With this object he was entrusted at the age of fifteen to the care of Maulvi Inayet Husain, a first class Orientalist and theologian of Deva who lived in Phapund near Etawah, under this scholar, Mehdi Ali prosecuted his studies with great diligence and assiduity, and was well-nigh accomplishing the end

marked out for him by his father, when some domestic troubles compelled him to find employment. The hopes of the family seemed to have been blased altogether, when he became a Moharrir in the Etawah Collectorate on the small salary of Rs. 10 a month. But a career of unique prosperity was in store for him. His gentlemanly bearing Mr. Allen Hume, the Collector, and Mehdi Ali was made an Ahlmad in the memorable year of 1857. Etawah did not escape the ravages of the rebels. We know on authority that a deputy of the Nawab of Farrukhabad held Etawah for some months, and it is a note-worthy fact that throughout this trouble-some period the family of Mehdi Ali maintained their loyalty towards the British Government. When peace was restored and all became calm and serene again, Mr. Hume returned to Etawah and made Mehdi Ali a Peshkar in his office. A year and a half afterwards, he was given a new start by being raised suddenly to a Sarishtedarship and two years later in 1861 he became a Tahsildar. As Tahsildar of Etawah, Mehdi Ali distinguished himself both for his administrative ability and for his thorough acquaintance with law. He rendered Etawah a far more beautiful town that it was before, and to numerous roads and public buildings seen there today are memorials of good work done by him under the guidance of his successive patrons, Messrs. Hume Pallock. He also compiled 'the two best vernacular works on Criminal and Revenue Laws' and passed in April 1863 for the Higher standard, beating most of his European convenanted fellow competitors. While still Tahsildar in Etawah, he was invested with a Deputy Collector's powers, a fact which reflects great credit on his Collector in Mirzapure with the additional duties of Superintendent of the Government State, Dudhi, and Manager of the Court of Wards, Raja Barhal. His work in Mirzapure was very successful and it may perhaps be worth while quoting from the Annual Administration Report of the Collector who said, 'I can safely say that there is not a more talented, energetic, and honest servant of Government amongst all the native subordinates in the N. W. Provinces.'

But after all, Deputy Collectorship is generally the highest pinnacle of honour to which a native without an English training may reasonably hope to reach in the executive line, and Mehdi Ali might have ended his career without any considerable improvement in his position as a Deputy Collector. But Providence had other work in store for him. The great Indian statesmen, Sir Salar Jung, heard of him and he was summoned on the 20th of September 1874 to take up the onerous duties of the Inspector-General of Revenues, Hyderabad. Here the field for his activity was vast and his statesman like powers had their full play. He soon rose to be the Survey and Settlement Commissioner in which capacity he did work of lasting good to the State by 'ensuring the fixity of tenure to the cultivators and by assessing fair rates on all lands'. Writing to the Nawab in 1886, the Hon'ble Sir Steuart Haylay, Lieutenant-Governor Bengal Said :

'Of your administrative work in introducing the Survey and Settlement and in putting the Revenue systems of the country on an exact and stable

basis, I can only say that you have there in rendered services to H. H.'s Government second only to the minister himself.'

In December 1876 Sir Salar Jung made Mehdi Ali his Revenue Secretary and put great confidence in him. The diplomacy and tact shown by this man of his choice at every step of his career was a source of much gratification to the Minister. 'There was no one who gave him more unpalatable advice sometimes; but on whose honesty of purpose and soundness of judgement he could better rely.' In 1884 he was appointed to the high and responsible post of Financial and Political Secretaryship, for which he was so eminently fitted. At about this period the Nawab reached the zenith of his power and influence. He received the titles of Muneer Nawaz Jung Mohsin-ud-Dowla and Mohsin-ul-Mulk Bahadur and his pay was raised to Rs. 2,800 a month in recognition of the 'eminent and faithful services rendered by him to the State'. He was also sent to England on behalf of the Nizam's Government to conduct the well known case against the Mining Company in which Sirdar Dilair Jung Abdul Haq was involved; and by the able and judicious manner in which he dealt with the intricacies of the case before the Special Commission in London he fully justified his selection and the confidence reposed in him. In England, the Nawab was introduced to many public men of the time, including the late Mr. Gladstone, whose private correspondence is an ample testimony of the high appreciation in which he held the Nawab.

The death of Sir Salar Jung in 1883 and the resignation of his son and successor three year later, followed as it was by the appointment of Sir Asman Jah to the premiership, were times of crisis for Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Party intrigues were rampant throughout the length and breadth of the State and it was impossible for any man to remain unaffected. Even Viqar-ul-Mulk, in spite of being the right hand of the Minister, was suddenly thrown out of the office which he had so honourably filled. Mohsin-ul-Mulk retired on the 15th July 1893, and said good-bye to Hyderabad, which had for so many years been the field of his successful labours. After retiring from office, a man of the ordinary caste of mind might have enjoyed his pension in calm domestic seclusion without having any more to do with the bustle of life and business. But the Nawab's energy and inexhaustible, and the latest enthusiasm with him now broke out in full blaze. Instead of withdrawing himself to his birth-place at Etawah he made his residence in Aligarh and joined the late Sir Syed Ahmed in the great work which he had devoted all his life to accomplish.

The Nawab's friendship with Sir Syed Ahmed was a very happy one and the curious manner in which it was formed deserves a brief mention in this sketch. In the beginning while only a Tehsildar at Etawah, the Nawab came across a copy of the commentary on the *At Tourait-wal Injil* written by Sir Syed Ahmed, and being a very orthodox Mahommedan, he felt so indignant on reading it that he wrote a strong letter to the author, denouncing him

as a heretic. A few months latter they met and a hot controversy ensued, resulting in a considerable alleviation of the dislike with which the Nawab had regarded the views of the future leader and hero of the Mussulmans. This interview was soon followed by the Nawab's visit to Aligarh, where he put up with Sir Syed and became his friend. Sir Syed told him of the great work which he intended to do for the good of his degenerate co-religionist and the two men were brought into close union and fellowship. The friendship thus formed grew with years. When the *Indian Social Reformer*, the first Mahommedan Journal of the kind, was started by Sir Syed, the Nawab's facile pen contributed very largely to the success which it achieved. The scholarly articles written by him have gone a great way to the formation of a good style in urdu literature. During his being immensely in the establishment of the Aligarh College, for which besides his private donations, in themselves amounting to no mean sum, he secured a most valuable grant-in-aid from the Nizam's State. Shortly after he joined Sir Syed in 1893 he was elected President of the M. A. O. Educational Conference for that year and the able address which he delivered on that occasion, established his reputation as an orator.

The lamented death of Sir Syed Ahmed which took place in 1898, threatened the very existence of the Aligarh College, but the Nawab and the late Mr. Theodore Beck strove manfully and successfully steered the ship through the storm which was so violently raging around it. The Nawab has since been the Honorary Secretary of the College, to which office he was thrice been elected by the general concensus of the Trustees. His financial abilities and mature experience have served him in good stead in this capacity, and the growing prosperity of the institution is largely due to his unflinching labour and zeal. He has just been appointed a Fellow of the Allahabad University, an honour which should have been conferred on him long ago in consideration of his eminent services to the cause of Mahommedan education. In spite of years and physical weakness, the Nawab is thus leading a busy and useful life and it is our fervent prayer that he may be blest with a long continuance of health and vigour and enabled to carry on his labours of love on behalf of the community.

Source : The Tribune, 15 October 1907.

46

LETTER FROM MINTO TO MORLEY ON MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S DEATH

16 October 1907

I am most sorry to tell you that the Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk died yesterday. He was, as you know, Secretary of Aligarh Anglo Oriental College, and was the chief mover in the Mahommedan Deputation to me—a most excellent man in every way, and it was only the other day that he was sitting in this room talking to me. He is a very great loss.

Source : Minto Papers : Correspondence with the Secretary of State, 1907.

47

THE TIMES ON NAWAB MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S DEATH

'We regret to announce that the death of Maulvi Syed Mehdi Ali, the leader of the Indian Mahommedans and the Secretary of M. A. O. College in whom India has lost a real statesman' born in 1837 and entered the Service of the British Government Etawah. Young Mehdi Ali was in those days a very earnest Mahommedan of the orthodox school, and he first made his appearance before the Indian public as a champion of orthodoxy by a fierce onslaught upon the liberal and rationalistic utterances of Syed Ahmed Khan, whose chief supporter and follower he was destined to be in later years. Mehdi Ali loved to tell how the passionate earnestness and transparent disinterestedness of Syed Ahmed first made him doubt the truth of the current orthodoxy, and little by little he was persuaded to adopt the unpopular views which he had once denounced and the two men went about together preaching to hostile audience which generally received them with stones and with abuse—that it was the duty of Mahommedans to learn the wisdom and the sciences of Europe, and that they were to make sincere friends of the English. These doctrines formed the basis of that great nationalistic movement in Islam which resulted in the foundation of the Mahommedan College in Aligarh, and of which one of the cardinal doctrines has always been that it is only under the aegis of British rule that the Mahommedans of India will be able to work out their social and intellectual regeneration.

Mehdi Ali was an eloquent and zealous apostle of what the orthodox

Mahómmedans decisively called the 'New Light', and like his great compeer, Sir Syed Ahmed, he suffered no small social persecution for his opinions. After the service of the Nazim he took up again that work of social and religious reform in which he was most deeply interested and upon the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898, he was called by the Unanimous voice of the Mussulmans of India to sit in his seat. In working for the Mahommedan College, in which all his hopes for his community were centred, he was indefatigable, and he travelled practically, over the whole of India,... appealing to his fellow Mahommedans to supp the 'national' College at Aligarh. Politically, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk exercised enormous influence over his co-religionists, and he never wavered in his opinion that the Mahommedan should abstain, from all forms of political agitation, and should keep aloof from the 'National Congress.'

Source: The Times, 19 October 1907.

48

DUNLOP SMITH ON MOHSIN-UL-MULK'S DEATH

Mohsin-ul-Mulk died at Simla.... He, practically alone, engineered the great Mahommedan Deputation of October 1906.... He had an interview with the Viceroy this summer.... He said he had nothing to ask for and nothing to say except that the Viceroy was a man of more than his word, that his deputation from all India had come to Simla a year before by no means hopeful of effecting anything, but Lord Minto, while saying very little to him in reply, had since done more to hold the balance even between the races than they had dared to hope for.

I had to be present at the interview to translate.... As the old man was backing out he first collided with a table and then with a screen by the door.

The Viceroy at once came forward and made as though he would open the door for him. The Nawab was much overcome and when he and I were outside in the passage with the door closed he said to me: 'That is a Badshah (Emperor). It is not every Viceroy that I have known who would have done that for this magnificent one upon whose head there is dust.

Source: Martin Gilbert, Servant of India.

49

LETTER FROM SIR J. P. HEWETT TO DUNLOP SMITH

I have heard from Sir Faiyaz Ali Khan that he will come to see me here on the 12th about the Secretary to the Aligarh College.... As you know, the appointment of Secretary rests with the trustees. Though the majority of the Trustees are resident in the provinces, there are a certain number belonging to other parts of India. There is no doubt that a certain amount of wire pulling has been going on in order to get Mushtaq Husain appointed to succeed Mohsin-ul-Mulk. He was one of the dissentients to the report of the Committee of Trustees upon the troubles that occurred in the spring. He is very conservative, not very fond of English ideas, and his appointment would certainly be most unpopular with the staff. The situation is not made easier by the fact that poor old Mohsin-ul-Mulk rather yielded during his last year to the breath of every wind and that since my visit to Aligarh in March last he came considerably under the influence of Mushtaq Husain. As you know, at other times they had been distinctly antagonistic one to the other. I am told that Mushtaq Husain is very anxious to come to me and give an engagement that he will, if made Secretary, work in concert with the Government in every way, and that if I do not wish it he will not allow himself to be nominated. If I interfere to prevent his nomination he may be expected to throw himself strongly into opposition, and to become a fervent supporter of Mohammed Ali and his gang, to the great detriment of the College. If, however, he becomes Secretary, he may be the best and most efficient engine with which to squash Mahommed Ali and his followers. I think, it is possible that I may be able to make terms with Mushtaq Husain if so I shall require him to subscribe him in writing to what I expect him to do. The whole question will require my careful handling. At present there are only two other candidates whose names are being considered : one, a very straight man, is not of sufficient position and influence. The other is Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, but his appointment would be an experiment, and he has certainly one disadvantage, that he is not well off.... I will let you know for his Excellency's information what the result of my discussion with Sir Faiyaz Ali Khan is, and whether it results in any likely solution of our difficulty.

Source **: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1907.**

50

LETTER FROM 'MODERATION' TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE SITUATION AT ALIGARH

'Who should succeed the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk' every thoughtful Mahommedan is asking himself. The question presents some unusual difficulties. The filling up of the vacant post of Secretary to an educational institution is by no means an uncommon thing. But whether for good or for evil the fact remains that ever since it was founded the Secretary of the Aligarh College has been not only the representative of the governing body of the institution, but also the *de facto* leader of the Indian Mahommedans. In fact the wonderful genius of the Great Nawab Sahib is accomplished so much in the field of politics that it is time to remind our people that in the election of his successor the welfare of the College should carry greater weight than considerations of expediency as regards the general Mahommedan policy. I should not be understood to imply that the future Secretary should have no voice in political questions. Circumstanced as we are at present he will, in all likelihood, have to take a prominent part in shaping our policy. But every man is not Mohsin-ul-Mulk. A really good political leader may not be an ideal Secretary. The late disturbances at Aligarh have left their deplorable impress. We badly want all that the Mahommedan and Englishman can give us. Let it be remembered that Aligarh College is not the work of the Mahommedan alone. The Englishman's portion of the work cannot be ignored. Englishman and Mahommedan have toiled together like good comrades and won many a hard fought battle against ignorance, prejudice and superstition. But the generals have always been *Anglo-Mahommedan.* To-day the need of co-operation is greater than ever. Without implicit confidence in the other neither of the two can achieve much. The indispensable qualification of the Secretary at the present juncture is that he should be a man of known violent views. Any real friction—however slight—between the representative of the Trustees and the staff will land us one knows not where.

The Board of Trustees can avoid the mistake of sacrificing the welfare of the College to our general political policy—and this without losing the services of our best leaders. Among the co-workers of the Founder of the College there are two gentlemen of the old type. Let one of them organise the Moslem League and work it. He is best qualified for the task—in fact he has so thoroughly identified himself with the movement that we can hardly think of the Moslem League without thinking of him. And let us call upon the other Hon. (I use this word designedly) gentlemen to give his time to the service of College. In this day he has rendered valuable services to the community and to Urdu literature. The College owes not a little to his purse,

and the very fact that he is not popular leader shows that he is a man of a pre-eminently cool judgment, not to be influenced by passing excitement. The arrangement will work satisfactorily for a limited period at any rate. It may be that at the expiry of that period a distinguished Mahommedan, who is returning to the land of his birth after many years stay in England may be willing to act as Secretary.

Before I finish I would beg to suggest that the All-India Mahommedan Conference should meet this year at Aligarh or Lucknow instead of Karachi. Some very important questions will have to be discussed this year, and many members of the educated middle class may not be able to undertake a long journey to Karachi. If pecuniary considerations do not allow the holding of the Conference at Aligarh, it is to be hoped that the Mahommedan Barons of Oudh will see their way to invite it to meet at Lucknow.

Source : The Pioneer, 28 October 1907.

51

LETTER FROM MORE 'MODERATION' TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEFR REGARDING THE SITUATION AT ALIGARH

I have read in your issue of the 28th October a letter signed by 'Moderation' on the subject of the situation at Aligarh. To me there appears to be nothing so unusual in the situation at Aligarh as to justify its discussion in the Public Press or the advice of 'Moderation', The late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk was an old man who could not be expected to have lived much longer in spite of all our prayers. But unlike the crisia through which Aligarh passed on the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the present situation presents no difficulties. The Nawab has left behind him a successor whom he invariably regarded as his only successor on more than one occasion when he intended to resign. The Trustees too are likely to be unanimous in their choice of him, and the voice of the community will be overwhelmingly in favour of one in whom it recognises a true and typical Mussulman like one of the Great Hearts of the early Caliphate, honest, sincere, cool in judgment, but possessing a rare enthusiasm in action for one of his years. The Government too will not fail to recognise as the spokesman of the Mussulmans one who is their chosen leader and a politician who has in these days of extremism chosen for himself a place equi-distant from servility and sedition. I do not mention his name designedly, not because like 'Moderation', I desire to discuss personalities while appearing to be impersonal, but because every thinking Mussulman who reads my

description of the man is sure to recognise the features of the sole successor of the late Nawab as the leader of the community. No such man will, I believe, agree with 'Moderation' in thinking that there are two co-workers of Sir Syed who have survived him and Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Camp followers and commissariat agents should not be raised to the dignity of commanders in battle; otherwise there are numerous 'co-workers,' who are as ready as the honourable gentleman for whom 'Moderation' holds a brief to step into the field and tilt at all they meet. The 'valuable services to the community and to Urdu literature,' which he mentions, are so microscopic that people would not readily admit them; and it is a novel excuse that a candidate for office is unknown to the electorate because he is a man of pre-eminently cool judgment, not to be influenced by passing excitements. Others may even hint that such recluses are not popular leaders, not because they have a 'cool' judgment, but because they have no judgment at all, and the greatest catastrophe of the community fails to influence them.

But it seems to me improper to discuss these things in the press even without mentioning names, at least at this stage of the progress of affairs. Why I have still considered it necessary to reply is that under the cloak of public duty a personal attack is, so to speak impersonally made on a most estimable gentleman. References to 'a man of known violent views' and 'real friction between representatives of the Trustees and the staff' overspread with a subtle aroma of flattery which Englishmen are too shrewd to mistake for real friendship, are nothing but a thinly veiled attack on a true patriot and a loyal citizen. The most valuable services of Englishmen to the cause of Moslem education in general, and the Aligarh College in particular, are as gratefully acknowledged by the future successor of Syed Ahmed Khan and Mohsin-ul-Mulk as any other Mahommedan, and they have hitherto been acknowledged without the least debasing touch of insincere flattery. But it is curious to make such silly references to violent views and friction, and still propose to offer to the gentleman attacked in the letter, the leadership of the Mussulmans in the field of politics—a field teeming with far more dangerous pit-falls than education and requiring not a man with violent views or a creater of friction, but a man of cool judgment uninfluenced by passing excitements. From the description given by 'Moderation' the honourable gentleman whose cause he pleads would evidently be more suitable for the leadership of the Moslem League, where the younger generation is spoiling for the fight, than the firebrand whom he so inconsistently suggests.

A world more on the more important question of politics and its connection with Aligarh. Whatsoever may have been at any time previously, or may now be the theory on this subject, Aligarh has been the centre of Mahommedan politics and religious and social reform no less than of education since the first day of its foundation. Like the University of Oxford, on the model of which it is professedly designed, Aligarh has been thinking three months ahead what Moslem India was to think three months later. It is in fact the

only institution which deals with the whole education of man. Such a vast sphere of human activity as politics has never been ignored at Aligarh, nor is it right that it should be ignored. What is required to-day, and what is the real purport of Sir Herbert Risley's recent letter is that practical politics should not be left to ignorant Schoolmasters and raw youths in their teens to discuss, not in an academic spirit in their debating societies, but in a rowdy manner in the public spirit and the market place. Government would welcome sane and sober politics such as has always been associated with Aligarh rather than desire its total extension. At Aligarh green school boys have not been known to dictate their political views to hoary statesmen and just because of this it is absolutely necessary to have at its head a veteran who has seen many a political campaign and led many an army to a bloodless victory. Whether he will be or not, the Secretary of the Aligarh-Trustees is bound to be the political leader of Islam in India. The Government too has acknowledged him to be the spokesman of Mussulman in all that concerns them. The recent letter of the Government of Sir John Hewett was addressed to the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk not as Maulvi Mehdi Ali, a citizen of Etawah, nor as the Ex-Finance Minister of Hyderabad, but as the Secretary of those 70 Trustees in whose hands is placed the greatest trust of 70 millions of God's creatures and who preside over the destinies of vast population of His Majesty the King Emperor's subjects. Aligarh is not like the many bread-and-butter institutions of India, requiring at its head a mediocre schoolmaster, but an intengible spirit that is diffused in every quarter of this vast Empire, wherever the Islamic formula of faith is pronounced. The loftiest monument to the combined zeal of East and West in the cause of a fallen people's regeneration, Aligarh must have its presiding genious the one chosen leader as acknowledged spokesman of the entire Mahommedan population of Britain's Empire in the East.

What is most important to remember at this juncture is that we should not fritter away our strength by a partition of powers. Not only for the sake of our own community, but also for the facility of Government which evades our reply to its liberal offer of our long deferred views, it is of the first importance that we should have only one plenipotentiary. To other communities too we should present the solid friend of a united people and the mantle of Sage of Aligarh should fall on one whom the world could unhesitatingly regard as the symbol of our communal identity. To my mind, Sir, the man who would propose to destroy our solidarity at this juncture, whether through fault of judgment or defect of character, is not our friend but our worst enemy. Let him in his ambitions practise.

Source: The Pioneer, 7 November 1907.

52

LETTER FROM 'BALANCE' TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING THE SITUATION AT ALIGARH

I have read the letter of 'Moderation' under the above heading. Though I agree in the main with the premises, the conclusions drawn by him are rather misleading. The present circumstances of the College and of the community demand that the Secretary of the M.A.O. College should have the following qualifications :

(1) It should be a man who knows the traditions, the aims and objects of the Aligarh College, and has, if possible, been a co-worker with the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the founder of the College. (2) He should be a practical man, of tact, ability and fore-sight, and possessed of some administrative experience. (3) He should already possess the confidence of the community. (4) Considering the fact that the Mahommedans do not yet consider wordly progress as apart from religion, and look upon purely anglicised men with distrust, he should be a man who knows of and acts upon the religion, and can satisfy both the old and the new school. (5) He should be a man who can be safely entrusted with the present political policy of Mahommedans. The duties of the Secretary of the Aligarh College are not merely academic, and any man, however learned he might be, would not do who has neither sufficient administrative ability, nor has the confidence of the community, nor was ever known to have taken any real interest in public affairs. Perhaps the man, who best answers to the above qualifications, is the Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, the right hand man of the late Sir Salar Jung, a most trusted advisor and colleague of the late Sir Syed Ahmed, a profound scholar and a versatile writer, and a man of strong commonsense and sterling character. After the late disturbances the great need of the moment at Aligarh is to restore discipline and for this no one is more fitted than the Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk. The meetings that are held in his favour in various places show the confidence and the respect of the community he commands. The Aligarh College is no longer a local college, and though the election of the Secretary formerly and legally rests with the trustees, they would, it is to be hoped never commit the mistake of overriding public opinion.

Source : The Pioneer, 10 November 1907.

53

LETTER FROM SHAH MUNIR ALAM TO THE EDITOR OF THE PIONEER REGARDING ALIGARH COLLEGE SECRETARYSHIP

With the death of Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the entire Mahommedan community in the length and breadth of India has lost a grand old man, who was their confident, their leader and what was more important their spokesman to the Government. In these capacities he virtually lived and worked ever since the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. The press and the people have showed a keener sense of gratitude in the case of Mohsin-ul-Mulk than what was in evidence at Sir Syed's death. The anxiety now is who is to wear his mantle and take up the work at once. The Mahommedan public has grown accustomed to associate the Aligarh College Secretaryship with a free pen and an eloquent tongue, and the secretary must be a ready writer and also an impressive speaker. Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk has been pointed out as the possible fulfilment of his countrymen's hope. Indeed he has worked so long with Sir Syed and has always taken a keen interest in the affairs of the college, that he is known all over India as an enthusiastic worker and as a good writer and an impressive speaker. The Government will find him a man who can well be a leader of the Mahommedans, as his nature, his education and his environments will surely make him a sound thinker and a frank and sincere spokesman. Mohsin-ul-Mulk has had a more extensive influence than that enjoyed by his predecessor among his countrymen, and Viqar-ul-Mulk is sure to be leader of Mahommedans, even if he does not fill the post of a Secretary. Mahommedans still need a man at the helm of their affairs who can give the best advice under all circumstances, and who can still say that the goal for Mahommedans is still 'education', and not the meddling in petty politics.

Source : The Pioneer, 15 November 1907.

54

LETTER FROM DUNLOP SMITH TO SIR J. P. HEWETT LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED PROVINCES

The Viceroy has just heard that there is no precedent for the proposed announcement in the next Honours Gazette regarding the late Nawab Mehdi

Ali Khan. Such announcements have only been made when the king has approved the honour, during the proposed recipients' life-time, and the latter has died before the date of publication. The proposed notification, which Your Honour had approved, will, therefore, not appear, but the Viceroy will be grateful if you could arrange to let it be known informally that it was intended to recommend Mohsin-ul-Mulk for a K.C.I.E. had he lived.

Source: Minto Papers : Correspondence with persons in India, 1907.

55

THE TIMES OF INDIA ON MOHSIN-UL-MULK

We are gland to learn on what is said to be unimpeachable authority that had he lived the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk would have been recommended for a knighthood in the New Year honours. There has been no name in the Indian Knighthoods more worthy than that of Mohsin-ul-Mulk. His services to Mahommedan education and to Urdu literature were second only to those of the great Sir Syed Ahmed. Nor did he view affairs from a sectional standpoint he was a patriotic Indian in the best sense of the term and his public work was sweetened by a simplicity and nobility of character which endeared him to all, even to those who differed from his politics. It has always seemed to us that Government showed something less than a just appreciation of eminent public services. When they allowed the Nawab to pass away with no greater mark of its approval than the orders of the Kaiser-i-Hind. However there is consolation in the thought that had he lived his work would have been more fittingly recognised; this knowledge gives satisfaction of the late Nawab's friends and promotes us to see that unobtrusive work such as his is not overlooked at the foundation of honour.

Source: The Times of India, 21 January 1908.

56

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS OF SIR ADAMJEE TO THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE FIRST SESSION, KARACHI

Gentleman, I thank you most heartily for the great honour you have done me in selecting me to preside over your deliberations at this second gathering of the All-India Muslim League. I can only say that this is one of the proudest moments of my life and that the memory of the honour you have done me will never fade from my mind.

I need hardly tell you that this is only the second occasion on which this League has met. Its first public appearance was in December last year at Dacca when that great son of our patriotic community, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, occupied the presidential chair. The success of that first effort was all that we could naturally except. Its proceedings were reported throughout the British Empire, and in the great London Press there were inspiring comments and criticisms which not only indicated that the movement had the widest sympathy of all well-wishers of the Mahommedans, but has imposed upon us the duty of developing this organization to its fullest possible extent.

If any doubt has ever existed, and I know of none, that the Mahommedans of India would fail in their duty to themselves, the gathering here to-day, the leaders of our people, the men in whom we put our trust and who are writing a memorable page in our history indicates in no uncertain way that the message has gone to the heart of the people, and we have at length awakened to the stern necessity of guarding our interests and advancing our cause. I have said that the first public evidence of our consolidation was given at Dacca, but the initiation of this movement goes a little further back. I know nothing which has been more productive of concrete result for the benefit of ourselves than that great and memorable national deputation which in October 1906, went to Simla and laid before H. E. Lord Minto the Petition embodying our national sentiments and aspirations. It will always be a matter of keen regret to me that circumstances denied me the honour and happiness of proceeding to Simla with the deputation, but I have some slight satisfaction in the fact that my own kith and kin, my son Ebrahim, together with Maulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmed, represented this part of India.

The splendid courtesy with which that deputation was received by H. E. the Viceroy, inspired the Mahommedans throughout India with complete confidence. His speech in reply to our memorial was a statesmanlike utterance and the very words of it are engraven indelibly on our memory. It breathed confidence, and whilst it committed neither His Excellency nor his Government to any particular line of action, we knew that the great interests of Mahommedans would never be lightly set aside or suffer neglect. Concrete evidence of that fact has already been given in the schemes suggested by the

Government of India for the improvement of the representation of the people on the Legislative Council, which regulates the affairs of India.

As I desired to say, the initiation of the League dates from the visit. You know as well as I do that the deputation was headed by His Highness the Aga Khan. That leader of our community is still young in years, but I only speak what we all have in our minds when I say we have hopes of his rendering us still higher services in the future. With him was lamented late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the Honorary Secretary of the deputation, to whom I must refer again. The first practical work was the formation of the plans for the organisation of this League. It first met at Dacca in the east and was pronounced a success. It was met again here at Karachi in the west, the greatest city of Sindh, the centre of Islam, and as I look round me to-day, I can only express my surprise that a Young movement has so quick found the heart of our people and touched us with one common object, the advancement of our historic people. What the future has in store for the League I dare not prognosticate; but if the same spirit which animates us to-day guides its destinies, it will not be long before our rulers, and Mahommedans the world over, will look to the proceedings of this League for knowledge of our aspirations and the correct measure of our advancement along the paths we are destined to proceed. I appeal to every Mahommedan in India to realize this important fact, to do all in his power to add to the strength of the League, to understand its aims and objects, and to render it that practical support without which it can do nothing. We have ventured to draw the attention of the whole of India upon us; we have elected to give evidence to our rulers that we are a community imbued with high ambitions, and we have thus imposed upon ourselves a task from which we dare not shrink. We have taken a step forward; to go back would be to drop into oblivion and stamp ourselves as unworthy of the place we demand in the British Empire. I cannot dwell on this aspect of our duty too long or with too much earnestness. What is our first duty to this end ? It is to be united in ourselves, to be of one mind and one purpose. We must of all things discard sectional jealousies and personal animosities; two evils which are capable of cankering the heart of the sublimest purpose. We must look to the good of the community as a whole : work shoulder to shoulder as true children of Islam. We are putting in the foundations of a mighty structure. Let us do good work.

My duty to-day, gentlemen, is to direct your energies to the consideration of those highly important subjects on which you will be called upon to express in opinion. They are momentous in all consideration, and whilst I have no intention of impressing upon you any particular views of own, I ask you to proceed with moderation and with due recognition of the responsibility placed upon you. It is scarcely necessary for me to say that I have but a poor knowledge of the paths of political controversy I am no scholar nor a man of many words. My sphere of action in this life has been cast in an

entirely different direction. Since the time when nature made it possible for me to turn my hand to toil, I have laboured, and I must admit I still have much affection for the man who uses his energies in that direction. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not despise those who labour in other fields. There is work for us all. Circumstances have compelled me to direct my energies into the paths of industrialism and no higher duty could be placed upon an individual. I believe in the dignity of labour as the great Prophet did. The history of our people, the history of our heroes and of those who have carried the flag of Islam over the world has been one of strenuous and ceaseless effort. Whatever we may have lacked in recent times in purely literary accomplishments, no one can charge the Mahommedan with not doing his fair share of the world's work. In India he has shown his special aptitude in industrialism, and I believe it is along these lines that he can best exert his influence and carve for himself a high position in the Empire. I love to see the development of Mahommedan enterprise, for it is a true measure of the energy and spirit of the people and we can never be without hope so long as we can maintain the reputation we have already earned. The history of the British people has shown that industrialism leads the way and on that foundation they built the great superstructure of the arts. We, above all others, cannot afford to neglect higher education, for our people must take their part in the responsibilities of Government and the advancement of all such movements as require the energies of trained intelligence. It gave me particular satisfaction two years ago, at the time of the memorable visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and his beloved consort, to show that I was capable of appreciating work in another sphere, by, in some slight measure, assisting to found the science School in connection with the Aligarh College.

It will be your duty, gentlemen, to turn your attention to highly important matters arising out of the proposed reforms in connection with the Indian Legislative Councils. I have no wish to impress upon you any ideas of my own, or to anticipate the decisions at which you may ultimately arrive. For myself, I must say that I received the news of the decision of Government, to reply to popular agitation by a considerable expansion of the principle of the Legislative Council, with every satisfaction. And this was enhanced by the fact that the Government has seen its way to recognize our prayer in the memorial addressed to H. E. Lord Minto, and safeguard the interests of the Mahommedans by providing class representation. As you are aware, the proposed reforms provide that there shall be a minimum of four Mahommedan representatives in the Imperial Council. Whether that number is adequate or not will be for you to say, but we must be grateful to the Viceroy and the Government of India for the recognition of those claims we specifically set out in our memorial. It indicates that the Government is prepared to listen to the popular voice, and if this attitude is carried still further and influences the Government in its nomination of suitable men to

represent us we shall have little to complain of. We must as far as possible preclude the monopolization of these appointments by those who have only personal ends to serve and, encourage and stimulate our rising young men to exert their talents and energies for the good of their community. In the provincial councils, the same provisions for Mahommedan representation are made, and if we can only infuse into provincial governments the spirit which has animated the Government of India and the Secretary of State in dealing with our just and moderate claims our labours will be considerably lightened. It is necessary for us to remember the wisdom expressed by Lord Minto to the deputation which waited on him at Simla. He said, 'I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for gradual political education of the people.' I am in full accord with those words and it is in this direction that our real labour must commence. When we learn to control our parochial surroundings, we can lay claim to adding our influence to imperial policy.

Another point in the memorial was the matter of the adequate employment of Mahommedans in the higher branches of the public service. We were told in the past that we lacked competence. That reproach can no longer be fairly brought against us in these days. We have in our midst educated Mahommedans who have fitted themselves for all responsible positions in the administration, and certainly our traditions show that we have always been faithful to any administrative trust reposed in us. It will be part of your duties, gentlemen, to discuss this matter, and I trust you will be able to add such weight to your words that the Government will adequately respond to your legitimate claims.

Our loyalty to the Government has never yet been impeached, and I trust it never will. But when a vast community sets itself to work to bring about its regeneration, its methods must be precise and open to no misconstruction. We recognize the difficulties of the Government in adjusting conflicting claims, but we must be as fearless as we are honest in our criticisms, whoever and whatever they may affect. So far as I know, the Government of India is the last to complain of criticism so long as it is far, moderate and upright.

As you know, the third object of our League is to present, as far as possible, the rise of hostile feelings between the different communities in India. With the object I am in complete sympathy, for it passes my understanding why the Mahommedans should in the advancement of their own interests injure those of any other people. We contribute to the common good by improving our own surroundings. It is no part of the purpose of this League to oppose the progress of other communities or to be aggressive towards them in any direction whatever. We respect all who work for the common good of the country.

I mentioned in opening my address the name of the late Nawab Mohsin-

ul-Mulk. His death at such a time was great blow to our community. Never were his services more needed than at the present time. He worked strenuously for the success of the deputation to Simla and it is some slight satisfaction to know that he saw at least the first fruits of his labours. His work was universally approved, for he had but one single object, and that the steady progress of his people. We have need of many such patriots and I cannot do better than ask our young men to study his life and works and let them be an example to follow.

The late Nawab has been succeeded as Secretary of the Aligarh College by Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur. The wisdom of that appointment is fully indicated in the fact that it was unanimous. I know of no one more capable of wearing the mantle of the late Secretary than his present successor. His past labours have all been for the good of his people and Mahommedans may congratulate themselves that the Nawab has consented t take up the work at Aligarh.

I have but lightly touched upon those subjects with which you will be called upon to deal. I can offer you but small guidance in your deliberations, but my heart and soul is with you, and I pray with all the earnestness of an old man that God will direct your energies and lead you into the paths of righteousness and wisdom.

Source : The Pioneer, 2 January 1908.

57

LETTER FROM ACTON FRONT TO THE PIONEER

It was in 1903 'that I met that grand old Mahommedan gentleman, the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, one of the most farsighted and patriotic Mahommedans India has ever produced. He then, and many times subsequently, confided in me his hopes and fears for his people. He felt that their scattered residence in India, the absence of a common ideal, and their helplessness as a political body, rendered them an easy prey to political agitators, and in their ignorance of consequences, the rising generation at the time were coquetting with sedition and forgetting their own interests as Mahommedans. He considered that unless some remedial measures were at once applied, the Mahommedan cause in India would be lost for ever. It was then that I placed before him my belief regarding the regeneration of India on a racial and communal basis, and I strongly advised him to form a Mahomme-

dan association or league that would separate the interests of his co-religionists from those of other communities around them; and that once the association was established, a deputation of its leading members should wait on the Viceroy; and if necessary the Secretary of State for India to represent the hopes and disabilities of his people. I suggested at the time that the association should be called the Indian Mahommedan League; and he enthusiastically exclaimed 'No! It must be the Indian Muslim League; and I shall travel about India, and consult all the leading Mahommedans on the subject.' It took two or three years for the scheme to mature; then one day we met again, and he proudly announced the formation of the League, adding :

'Now my brethren are saved and whatever happens in India we shall always be able to hold our own, with the help of God.'

Source : The Pioneer, 2 January 1911.

58

LETTER FROM LIEUT.-GOVERNOR EAST BENGAL TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

5 October 1908

I think that the political effect of the Nawab's resigning his seat in Council and absenting himself for any length of time from Decca would be bad, as his local influence in keeping Mahommedans steady is invaluable. Mr. Nathan who is here goes down on Friday next, and I hope to be able through him to induce the Nawab to reconsider the decision.... It was for this reason I telegraphed to you yesterday that the passport might not be granted pending further communication from me.

Source : Minto Papers (Confidential), Correspondence with persons in India, 1908.

59

SPEECH OF AMEER ALI ON INDIAN MAHOMMEDANS AND BRITISH RULE

The gathering was designed to bring some of the leaders of political thought in England into touch with Indian Mussulmans, and thus to stimu-

late the interest of English people in a community forming nearly 70 millions of the population of India. In view of their traditions, religion, and race their interests could not be identical in all respects with these of the rest of the people of India, and hence it was incumbent on them to combine and work loyally together for the promotion of their own welfare. While they desired to work in harmony with the rest of the loyal elements in India in advancement of the general interests of the country their position was perfectly distinct. They believed that the continuous development of their country was dependent on the permanence of British rule in India, and on the loyal cooperation of the people of India with the servants of the British Crown. They recognised the necessity of improvement in different directions in order to bring the administration into line with all legitimate Indian aspirations...their special needs included measures for the preservation from disintegration and pauperization of Mahommedan families, a process now going on owing to unfortunate changes in the interpretation of the Moslem laws of family inheritance. They had to urge upon the Government have and in India the proper application of existing funds, which were now being wasted to the purpose of the education of Mussulman upon broad modern lines. They also urged the necessity for the direct representation of Mussulmans upon the representative bodies which were about to be established in India in accordance with the requirement of the present time, and which had been fore shadowed in the Royal Message. They also desired to suggest the larger employment of qualified Mahommedans in the service of the state....

Source : The Pioneer, 11 December 1908.

60

TIME'S REPORTING OF AMEER ALI'S SPEECH AT THE LONDON MUSLIM LEAGUE INAUGURAL MEETING 1908

In the course of his inaugural address the Chairman said that the occasion was not without importance, for it was the first gathering of the King's Mussulman subjects in the metropolis of the British Empire to ensure corporate action for their advancement. So far from being actuated by sectional or factious motives, their primary idea was to promote concord and harmony among the different nationalities of India, and to work in furtherance of the general interest of the country and the cause of good government, in cooperation with their fellow-countrymen of all classes and creeds. But for this purpose, as also for the purpose of safeguarding and prosecuting their general interests, they

felt the necessity of cohesion and solidarity among themselves. It was useless denying the fact that hitherto the Mahommedan community had in the administration of the country been regarded as a negligible quantity. Their inability so far to derive full benefit from the progressive movements of the time, or to exercise their legitimate influence on the counsels of Government, had been attributable to various causes, among them being their slowness in the first instance to take to English education, and their failure to recognise as a body the value of corporate and communal activity. The process of disintegration, assisted from outside, had gone on for nearly three quarters of a century until Mahommedan society was composed only of cliques and factions with conflicting aims and ambitions. But in recent years great changes had occurred in India, and at last the Moslem community had awakened to the fact that attainment of its ideals and the recognition of its rights rested upon its own collective exertions. The formation of the All India Moslem League was the outcome of this recognition and it existed to promote by all constitutional methods the welfare of the Mahommedan subjects of the British Crown, and to safeguard their interests without wantonly hurting the feelings or illegitimately encroaching on the rights of any other community. He adhered to a principle he had publicly expressed in London when a law student 37 years ago, that 'United India should be the watch-word of our progress,' which he had since consistently followed. The Mahommedans, equally with the other communities, were interested in the broadening of the foundations of Government on real liberal lines, in the broadening of the bases of sympathy between the official classes and the people; in the growth in India and in the colonies of better relations between Easterns and Westerns, in the development of representative institutions, and in the improvement of various departments of administration. But the Mahommedans had their own particular interests, and could not strive for the attainment of their ideals under the aegis of any organisation other than their own. As examples of directions for definite communal effort, he mentioned the desirability of moving the Legislature to undo the mischief that had resulted from judicial pronouncement against family wakfs (endowments), or against the legitimacy of children of a Moslem female convert; of asking for an adjustment of the political balance; and of founding a Moslem place of worship in London. It would also be an object of the organisation to bring Mahommedans into touch with the leaders of thought in England. He concluded with an expression of horror and abhorrence, shared, he was certain, by all true friends of India, at the cruel outrage at Muzaffarpur. He wished he could hope that the deed was an act of isolated malice or individual vindictiveness; but he greatly feared the poison had been allowed to go too deep to justify such hope. He had endeavoured to represent to responsible people the necessity of dealing not merely with symptoms by palliatives, but of trying to eradicate the poison by reaching the heart—the inner feelings of the people.

Source : The Times, 7 May 1909.

INDEX

ISLAMIC BOOK CENTRE

26-PAISA AKHBAR

ANARKALI, LAHORE